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DICK GAZED AT HIS ADJUTANT A MOMENT, IN UTTER AMAZEMENT, THEN BURST OUT INTO A HEARTY LAUGH.

OR, Turning the Tables on Satan.

BY EDWARD L. WHEELER,
AUTHOR OF "DEADWOOD DICK" NOVELS, ETC.

CHAPTER I.

DEADWOOD DICK ARRIVES.

"I SENT to the Government bureau to supply me with a competent man!"

"I was ordered here."

"I hardly judge by your appearance that you will fill the bill."

"Mr. Elton, do you know my past record?"

"No, nor do I care to."

"Thank you! You are simply silly!"

Mr. Horace Elton, the rich grain operator of Detroit, sat in his home office, on Brainerd

street, but a few blocks off—Woodward avenue, city of Detroit, and looked at the man sitting opposite him at the table with a steady glare.

"What do you mean?" he inquired, grimly. "Where did you ever *do* anything?"

"Galveston, Denver, Deadwood, Chicago, New York, Boston, and Philadelphia."

"You come here on the recommend of the Government Secret Service chief?"

"Precisely. Otherwise I certainly should not be awaiting your pleasure."

Elton seemed impressed with the answer. He thought a moment; then turned to his books—more for thought than for business.

"How much do you expect for your services in case I conclude to employ you?"

"That will depend somewhat on the nature of what I have to do, and your own estimate of the value of my work. If I succeed, no doubt you would reward me handsomely, seeing, as I suppose, there is a fortune involved."

"Oh, perhaps," Elton replied evasively.

Then, after a moment of reflection, he added:

"Well, the case is this: My name, as you know, is Horace Elton. I had, four years ago, a sister living, named Ethel Elton, but who at that time was not of legal age. Being her senior by nearly twelve years, I was, on my father's death, appointed her guardian."

"I kept her in a convent-school to be educated until she was twenty—four years ago—when, having completed her studies, I brought her here to my home and made her welcome."

"Ethel was ever a willful girl, set in her ways, and inclined to be rebellious, where she should have been for her own good the reverse. I had set much in store for her, and hoped to see her make a brilliant marriage, whereby she would secure an elegant home during life. In this, however, I was disappointed."

"I had picked out for her husband a staid, sensible man, a trifle older than myself, who long since retired from business, and is more than moderately well to do. The match would have been a highly desirable one."

"About this time—"

"What was the name of this gentleman whom you had picked out for a future brother-in-law?" interrupted the detective, whom we may announce as the famous R. M. Bristol, or, Deadwood Dick, Jr., so well known to the readers of this library.

"His name is Valentine Vinton."

"A man about town, I presume?"

"Not particularly, although he is well known. He belongs to a couple of clubs, and dines there, while he rooms at the Brunswick. But, so far as he is personally concerned, he has nothing to do with the case."

"Very well. Go on."

"Well, after my sister returned from the convent, she met my clerk and private secretary, Mr. Harry Henley, and was foolish enough to fall in love with him. He was a nice enough fellow in his way, but was of obscure birth, and in no way a match for my sister, and I naturally forbade any intimacy between them. My order was not obeyed, however, and I shortly learned that they were in the habit of meeting clandestinely. I then promptly discharged Henley, and finding some discrepancies in his accounts, I ordered him to leave town, ay! leave the States under penalty of arrest."

"He went over to Windsor, so I have since been informed."

"Well?"

"My sister chafed under the restraint under which I had placed her, and one night she fled from this house, and made good her escape. I immediately employed detectives, both here, and in Ontario, but without discovering her whereabouts. Henley was found, in Windsor, but denied any knowledge of my sister, although I knew at the time that he lied. I had him shadowed for

nearly a year, but to no purpose, and finally gave the matter up. Henley also finally left Windsor, and I heard no more of him until nine months ago, when he wrote me that he and Ethel were married, and living happily, in Toronto, and sought my forgiveness, so that he could return to Detroit."

"I wrote back that I could not forgive, but if I ever met him, I'd put him in State's Prison. The same train that carried this letter to Toronto, also carried me, and on arriving there I at once employed detectives to hunt up Henley. But, again, after a week of time and much expense, we were unsuccessful, and returned home, I having determined never to bother with the case, again."

"Well, I heard no more of Henley, until a week ago."

"In the meantime, my grandfather has died, in this city; and left a very large fortune, to which myself and sister would be natural heirs, were she still living. Upon the reading of my grandfather's will, however, it appears that I have been cut off, with a dollar, and the rest of the fortune is left to my sister, during her natural life, and after her death to be divided equally, first, between her children, if she has children, or, if not then between her husband and next of kin, providing she possesses such."

"Well?"

"Well, of course I believe this will to be a daring forgery, for I was always the favorite with my grandfather, and he would not have dreamed of leaving so large a sum to my sister, particularly as he never took much stock in women, to say the best. I believe the will is a forgery, and that Harry Henley had a hand in it, in order to get the fortune!"

"How long since your grandfather died?" Deadwood Dick inquired.

"Just four weeks ago."

"Of what did he die?"

"Oh! a combination of diseases incident to old age. He had been an invalid, for some time."

"His name?"

"Jacob Elton."

"Have you any date or facts to lead you to suppose that the will is a forgery and the work of Henley, further than a simple suspicion?"

"I have. To my knowledge, Henley has a wife living in this city, whom he was secretly married to, before he was discharged from my employ. So that if he and my sister are married, Henley is a bigamist, and liable to arrest, as soon as he can be found. That's one point."

"Another one is, that two days after my grandfather's death, I received a letter, from Henley. He said that he had returned quietly to Detroit, and was living here in company with his infant son. He made no mention whatever of my sister, and from that fact, I fear she may have met with foul play at his hands."

"He further stated that he had heard of grandfather's death, and should at once take steps toward securing the fortune!"

"Can he do so?"

"I'm thinking he'll have a healthy time trying it!" was the grim reply. "I've ordered my lawyers to take immediate steps toward breaking the will, and Henley will hardly dare come forward and fight the case, for fear I'll have him arrested on old scores."

"No, siree! that will shall never hold! It's a forgery from the face of it, and I'll break it if I have to spend every cent I am worth!"

"Well, you've told me so much of the matter, what now, do you expect *me* to do?" Deadwood Dick demanded, lighting a cigar.

"First of all, I want you to find Harry Henley, and report to me. Find out where he lives, what he is doing, if my sister is living with him, and if proof can be produced that they are married. If they are, I

shall have him arrested for bigamy, and sent to prison. He being a bigamist, his child of course is debarred—and not a legal heir, and if I can once more get Ethel under my influence, she will divide the fortune with me, and have her child sent to the foundling asylum! Half of the fortune is all I want, and that half I am going to have!"

And the speculator smote the table with his fist, and looked decidedly in earnest.

Deadwood Dick gazed at him a moment, in silence.

"Mr. Elton," he said, directly, "I can't say that I am over anxious to accept this job, although, of course, having been ordered here by Headquarters, I shall not refuse to go ahead, to a certain extent. Excuse me for telling you so, but it looks to me much like a reprehensible piece of business to begin with!"

Elton frowned.

"Reprehensible? How, sir? Explain yourself!"

"Because you strike a revengeful blow at a sister and propose to utilize the detective bureau to accomplish that purpose. Now, here you seek out of spite, evidently, to crush a man whom you never liked, and whom you forced to quit the States, because he had the audacity to love your sister. You want to drive him to the wall, destroy his future prospects and happiness, and send him to prison a branded criminal!"

"No more than he deserves!" was the grating retort.

"You propose to break up his home, tear him from his wife and child, and disgrace both mother and child. More, you would, if possible, wrest from your own sister that which was left her exclusively."

"Now, then, everything considered, do you not call these reprehensible actions, on your part?"

Horace Elton grew darker with rage.

"I don't know as it's your business *what* I call them. You're not hired to criticise my methods, sir, nor my actions, and if you don't want to take the job, and strictly mind your own business, why, let it alone, and I'll send for a Pinkerton man!"

Dick laughed.

"Do so," he said, rising to go. "I wouldn't care if you hired forty of 'em. There is plenty of room for all to work in this case, I should say."

"How do you mean?" Elton demanded, suspiciously.

"I mean that, no matter how many Pinkerton men are in the field, they will not retard my investigations!"

"Do I understand, that, I not employing you, you will concern yourself in this matter?"

"Exactly! You've hit my meaning to a word! I am now really quite interested in the case, and have no idea of letting it drop. That isn't my style."

Elton bit his lip, arose abruptly, went to a side-board, and imbibed a heavy draught of liquor.

When he came back, he said:

"Very well; then there will be no use of my employing a Pinkerton man. Go to work thoroughly and systematically, and when you have ferreted out Henry Henley's whereabouts, come to me, and I will give you one thousand dollars in cash!"

Deadwood Dick bowed.

"All right!" he responded, "I shall give the case a thorough sifting, but, understand this: If your suspicions of Henley prove incorrect, as regards the forgery of the will, and I find that you are still disposed to get him in your power only to crush him, I shall direct my efforts to keeping him as much as possible out of your way. I have the honor, sir, of bidding you good-day!"

And turning the man of the Wild West departed.

As soon as Dick had left the house, Elton arose, crossed to one side of the room that served him as private office, and rung a call

for a messenger boy. The frown on his never-pleasant face betokened an ugly resolve.

CHAPTER II.

PICKING FOR POINTERS.

WHEN Dick Bristol left the Elton residence his mind was busied with many conflicting thoughts, and really having no particular place to go, he turned out of Brainerd street, into Woodward avenue, and wandered leisurely down-town.

The day was a beautiful one, and the great thoroughfare was crowded with busy shoppers and well-dressed strollers; but the Wild West detective paid but little attention to what was going on around him.

His mind was busied with one thought above all others.

"Horace Elton is a *rascal*!" he mused. "He is scheming to get Jacob Elton's fortune, and means to leave no stone to accomplish his object. What puzzles me is, why does he wish to capture Harry Henley, and employ a detective to find him, when he could hire some ruffian to do the job, and put the husband, wife and child all out of his way? It could do no good to put Henley in jail alone, and leave Ethel and the kid free, for they would inherit the fortune anyhow, unless Horace Elton should succeed in breaking the will, and I judge he would not wish to have that done, for, contrary to his assertion that he only wants half the fortune, it would suit him far better to have the whole. Yes! yes! there is something more that I do not understand. I must go to the bottom of this whole business. One thing, in particular, I shall have to bear in mind. Although ostensibly my employer, Horace Elton is my enemy. He hates me because he didn't find me a subservient tool to accomplish his ends; he hates me because he *fears* me. He has got a secret, and fears I will ferret it out. I shall be on the alert. Ten to one he'll put a Pinkerton man on, to watch me!"

Verily, the detective's estimate of Mr. Horace Elton was not very flattering as a result of a first interview.

Deadwood Dick had arrived in Detroit two days before from Leadville, but he had taken time to look around the beautiful City of the Strait before honoring Mr. Elton with a call.

He had put up at the Russell House, on the Campus Martius, and thither he now wended his way for the purpose of donning a heavier suit of clothes, for it was now autumn, and cold winds began to sweep down the strait from the northern regions of the lakes.

After he had made his toilet he once more issued from the hotel and crossed the Campus to the City Hall, taking his way to the office of the Register of Wills, where he sent in his card, requesting a few minutes' private interview.

Dick's appearance now, in a new suit of clothes, fall overcoat, and silk hat, not to mention a fine gold chain and diamond stud, was decidedly attractive.

His handsomely engraved professional card, with his bright face in one corner, had the effect to secure admittance to the register's private office.

"Glad to meet you, Mr. Bristol," he said, rising and extending his hand, "but I hope you will not detain me longer than necessary, for I am over-busy to-day."

"A few brief answers will suffice. I am in the employ of Horace Elton to investigate matters relating to the late Jacob's will. Has that will been recorded?"

"It has not."

"Who has possession of it?"

"It is in our safe."

"It leaves everything to Ethel Elton?"

"Yes."

"Why has it not been probated?"

"After it was read it was handed over to me to put on record, but a demurrer was

served on us by Horace Elton, forbidding the probate, he claiming that it was a forgery, and nothing must be done until a thorough investigation could be made."

"Has one been made?"

"I understand one is about to be made."

"Can I see the will?"

"We have no authority without Mr. Elton's permit."

"Who read the will?"

"Lawyer James Jarrel, of Griswold street. He had been in Jacob Elton's employ many years."

"I suppose, of course, he drew up the will?"

"No; he claims not. He was in the country at the time the will was drawn. The will was signed the night before Mr. Elton died. That is all I can tell you, sir; you will really have to excuse me."

"One more question. Who witnessed the signing of the will?"

"One Job Razzle, a life-long body servant in the Elton family. The other witness was a stranger who was called in off the street—not an uncommon thing in a case of haste. He signed himself Vincent Valentine. Good-day, sir!"

"Good-day. Many thanks to you!"

And Dick was ushered out with perceptibly more haste than he was ushered in.

But what had he lost in that interview?

Nothing!

What had he gained?

A fund of information he might not have been able to gain elsewhere.

Lawyer James Jarrel had read the will. Point one.

Horace Elton had forbidden the will going to probate. Point number two.

Jarrel was out of town when this will was made, and there seemed to be no clear knowledge of who drew up the will. Point three.

The will was not signed until the night before Jacob died. Point four.

The will was witnessed by an old-time body-servant called Job Razzle and a man called in from the outside—a Mr. Vincent Valentine.

Question: From whom had Lawyer Jarrel receive the will after it had been executed?

His next procedure was to go in search of the lawyer and Griswold street.

He soon found the man of the law in the third-story back room.

Evidently the firm of Jarrel & Jenks did not enjoy the professional prosperity accorded to some of their more prominent brethren.

Their office was illy furnished and contained two persons, when Dick made his entrance—a bald-headed man and a dude.

The first had evidently seen service at the "bar" for many years, for his head was big and his nose was cardinal.

The other had evidently just cut his first wings in Blackstone, and an indulgent father had fitted him out with enough clothing to see him through the first years of trials and vicissitudes usually encountered by the embryo lawyer.

Dick presented his card to the elder, and received:

"Well, what do you want?"

"Am I addressing Attorney James Jarrel?"

"Yas. Go ahead!"

"You were formerly the counselor of the late Mr. Jacob Elton?"

"Yes," gruffly.

"Can you inform me of whom you received Mr. Elton's last will, which is now likely to come into litigation?"

"I'll tell you nothing. I am no longer counsel for the Eltons, Horace Elton having transferred the business to another firm. Besides, I've no use for *detectives*!"

And then the old man arose and slammed out of the office.

"Perhaps because you're afraid some one of them will be after you some day," quickly concluded Dick.

But when the old man was gone, the junior partner remarked:

"Don't mind the gov'nor to-day. Just lost a case—see? Little off. Maybe I can help you."

Dick paused.

"From whom did Jarrel receive the will?"

"From *me*. The will was left in my charge, and was locked up, unsealed, in the safe, until he returned."

"Do you know who drew it?"

"The testator."

"How do you know?"

"Familiarity with his style of chirography, was what gave me the supposition."

"Who gave you the will?"

"Old Job, his servant—the morning after death had taken place."

"Where is old Job, now?"

"No one knows. He disappeared after the reading of the will, and has not been seen since. Mr. Horace took charge of the old house in Gratiot street, where old Elton had lived, and I suppose Job had to go."

"Were you present at the reading of the will?"

"Yes."

"Who else?"

"Mr. Horace, Job Razzle, a lawyer employed by Horace, Mr. Jarrel and myself."

"The second witness to the will was not present then?"

"No."

"Do you know of a person named Harry Henley, or know of his whereabouts?"

"No."

"Try and inquire. It will be a week's wages to you. Here's a bonus for your information. Thanks! good-day!"

And Dick bolted, glad to get out of the musty-smelling den.

CHAPTER III.

MR. HAYMAN.

LEAVING the dingy law-office, Deadwood Dick sauntered through Campus Martius, and on as far as the Grand Circus, one of Detroit's beautiful breathing parks, so many of which adorn the city.

Sauntering in this public resort, Dick encountered the ubiquitous Park tramp.

He was thin, emaciated, woe-begone; his clothes were ragged; the wreck of a hat was upon his head, and the shoes upon his feet evidently were picked out of ash-barrels. His head had recently been shaven, but his beard was of more than a week's growth.

This woe-begone tramp stood by the fountain gazing into the water that sprinkled from the hand above, as if the genius of the fountain had a sort of horrid fascination.

Dick had been looking at the old wreck for fully ten minutes, thinkingly.

"My friend!" he said, as he stepped up to him, "you are in trouble."

"Trouble?"

The tramp looked at him wonderingly.

"Yes. You are an ex-convict."

"I knew what you would say," was the reply; then glancing first at the water, and then at the Park where the mowing-machine was going over the freshly-cleaned turf—

"You are a detective."

"Yes."

"Well, then, take me in."

"All right. Move on!"

They walked until out of police view.

"Now, you can stop!" said Dick. "Here is a seat as yet undisturbed. You are the man I want for a certain purpose, and, by looking you over, I think you will answer my purpose. If I do not pick you up, the Park guard will, and you will be all the worse off."

"Let them! I'll have a winter's lodging, anyhow."

"But you don't need it. I can put you on a job where you can right yourself!"

"Say, senator, it's no use. When I quit Joliet prison two weeks ago, I swore never to do a bad act again, nor I *won't*! That

settles that! I'll go in as a vagrant and do my time, but no more of crooked work for me. I was sent up when it wasn't for me to go, for t'other poor cuss was the man, but he had one leg in the grave—he died a week later—an' I couldn't see it. I *went it*, though it's been tough. I had a term once before—two years. I was at work then for a firm, Horace Elton and Company. I have always been unfortunate. I was sweeper and cleaner. I never took a cent, but it cost me a sad term, that broke down my health. No, no, detective, you don't want me for any good. Take me in. Perhaps, to-morrow, I'll be out of my misery!"

Dick thought a minute.

"Yes," he said, "I'll lock you up to-night, but first, you must be no vagrant. Come!"

Half an hour's walk brought him to a place that rivals any in the great metropolis of New York—"Baths, Clothes—John Hines, Jr."

It was in a basement, and here was a large assortment of second-hand clothing and gents' furnishing goods.

The proverbial Hebrew, but rather a pleasant appearing man, presided behind the counter.

"I want this fellow scrubbed, from top hair to toe-nail!" Dick announced, "then give him a dressing-gown, or anything to hide his nakedness, and transfer him to the barber-shop adjoining. By that time, I will be back and purchase him a suit of clothes, and so forth. Here are five dollars, toward his introduction to water. I'll pay the rest when I return. "Oh! by the way," turning to the tramp, "what is your name?"

The poor wretch had been standing, taking in his surroundings, and evidently wondering if he had fallen into a new paradise.

He looked at Dick, in surprise.

"You don't know my name, then?"

"I do not."

"Well, it's Hank Hayman, if that will do you any good—Hank Hayman, who, after the world turning against him, and after the tortures of Joliet prison, would murder, fire or steal, for the sake of food, and rest; but beg, no, never!"

The second-hand dealer retreated behind the counter in dismay.

Dick simply laughed.

"Oh! you need not be afraid of him. He will harm no one, unless they tread upon him. I'll fix him up so that Hank Hayman, with a past, will be a creature of the past. Go to work, now! I'll be back!"

Then Dick walked out of the place where "gentlemen's" cast-off suits were selling at half cost.

"Well! well!" and Hayman looked after the detective, longingly. "If ever I met a sublime crank, that fellow is one! I can't seem to catch on to his racket, but, he'll not steer me into no crooked business, *this* trip! Two terms at Jolly aire enough, with a yard or two spare. But, if he wants to use me against Horace Elton, well—"

The heavy brows knitted, and a dangerous light entered his eyes.

He took his bath, and was scrubbed and rubbed down, until his complexion, from top to toe, was pink. Then he was rushed into an adjoining barber shop, and cleanly shaven, which effected a marvelous change in his appearance.

Though but forty years of age, he now looked five years younger.

Dick returned, within an hour, with an equipment of under-clothes, collars, cuffs, scarfs, a sachel, a watch and chain, and a revolver, not to mention a white shirt.

When these things were spread out upon the table, Hayman, half *dishabille*, burst out:

"Say, pal, what do you mean? Ye know what I've sworn to—not to do another crime o' any sort. And it would be a crime fer me to accept these things!"

"Nonsense. You will have no crimes to commit, if you brace up, and be a man. Here, Levi, fit Mr. Hayman out in the best

every-day serviceable suit you have, hat and shoes included!"

We will pass over the accouterment. When Mr. Henry Hayman was "fixed out" according to Deadwood Dick's liking, he looked like a respectable business man, despite the frown that seemed born upon his heavy brows.

As for Hayman, himself, he said nothing more. He had tried to express an opinion, once or twice, during the transformation, but had failed. He was literally dazed, over this unexpected streak of seeming good luck.

"Now come!" said Deadwood Dick, when the finishing touches had been given.

Hayman eyed him a moment, suspiciously.

"Where?" he demanded.

"To my room."

Hayman followed. A new light, it seemed, had begun to dawn upon him. He was not to be taken to a police station. At last, he found his voice.

"My friend," he said, "I know not what or who you are, but I'm a bad man, and there's many o' my own pals who will know me even in this rig. You'd better shake mel!"

"Oh! no. I'm one of your pals," Dick replied, "and it is for the purpose of getting acquainted with the tough element, that I engaged you. I do not want you to commit a crime, but to help me from permitting others to do that. Is that enough? Will you make a man of yourself and fight against evil instead of for it?"

"With the help of a Holy God, I will! My friend—my friend, you have lifted me literally from hell into Heaven! I was crushed down once, but now, I feel a spirit that will surely guide me into a new life. I once was a respectable—an honorable man, and now—well, I will struggle again. I have a fair education. I have strength, and courage to carry out my promise."

They walked on until they came to the hotel, when Dick went to the desk, and registered an assumed name for his companion, both to occupy the same apartment.

Hayman watched proceedings with deepest curiosity. As yet, he was unable to understand it all.

Less than two hours ago, he was a tramp, in all the essential elements that the word implies—an outcast. Now, he had a friend! There could be no doubt about that.

When shown to the room, one of the finest in this magnificent hostelry, Hayman sat down, gazed around him, that still dazed expression upon his face.

"I once had all these things, or alike them," he remarked, rather mournfully. "Well, now, friend of mine, what do you want?"

"What do I want?" the detective replied. "Say rather, what do you want? Food and drink, before you can talk, eh?"

"Not a thing! Food will be welcome after awhile—drink, never! I spoiled a good home, once, by that. Would that I had never known what it was!"

"I am glad to hear you say that," Dick replied, reflectively, "but in the society into which I am going to send you you must needs take something."

For the first time since their singularly-made acquaintance Hayman laughed.

"I can juggle a glass of 'red,' and put it down inside my shirt-collar without its going down my throat, and not a mark left!"

"Good! that will do. Now to other matters. You remarked once that you had been in Joliet Prison. That's in Illinois."

"Yes."

"Where else?"

"This State."

"Are you acquainted with the slums of this city?"

"I ought to be."

"So you ought to be acquainted with their *habitudes*!"

"Not of to-day, for I'm just back. I—"

Here he paused. But, continuing, said: "I could put you onto a 'fence,' no matter what you want, but my blood boils at going against that which bore me. Promise me immunity against arrest of one whom even my black soul can't go back upon—*my mother*—and I will take you to her den. She's not crooked—I'd cut the throat of any who dared say anything of the sort—but she keeps a saloon where the 'perfesh' hangs out. What *they* do she doesn't have a hand in. They come, they pay, they go. That's all. Vanderbilt of New York could go in there and come out safe!"

"Where does she live?"

"On Larned street; but let me go with you when you go, because, perhaps, I can put you onto things that may be of use to you."

"Hayman, you shall go. Now, another question: Do you or did you ever know a man by the name of Harry or Henry Henley?"

"I should presume that I *did*!"

"How long ago?"

"Are you working *against* him?"

"I decline to answer."

"Are you a friend of Horace Elton?"

"Yes."

"Then, sir, I cannot answer you!"

"Well, not a friend in the sense you infer. I shall do Henley no harm, rest assured of that."

Hayman waited a moment.

He seemed to be turning something over in his mind or memory.

"Are you at work on the Jacob Elton will case?"

"Yes."

"I thought so. Well, Henley was a right good boy. He was open, free-hearted, yet rather retiring. He attended to his business and made Horace Elton much of the wealth which he now possesses; but when Ethel came then trouble came. It was a case of love at first sight. Horace was fired at the first sight of their apparent intimacy. I was then—although a man in business prominence a few years ago—a messenger, so I knew it all. Finally Ethel was barred from coming to the office, and courtship was carried on by correspondence. I was the pigeon that carried the letters. Afterward there was an elopement. You may know more after that."

"Yes, I am somewhat informed. But, can say you where Henley may be found, at present? He is a needed man in this will case. You have done much to aid me in my work, I think. Now it is necessary to find the man I want."

Hayman was again suspicious. Prison life had sharpened his wits. So he hesitated.

Dick simply laughed.

"You are again suspicious? Why?"

"Well, I cannot explain that, my friend. I always thought I was a judge of character, but you are a poser. Now, who are you?"

Dick handed him his card, which the ex-convict scanned with surprise.

"I have heard of you. Now, I no longer doubt that you are solid."

"Then I will ask you: are you familiar with the residence of Horace Elton?"

"As well as the architect, himself. I was employed on the buildings, adjoining, and saw the whole construction."

"Do you think there is a place in it where a woman could be concealed?"

"Ethel Elton, is not, telling God's honest truth, in that house."

"Why do you think so?"

"Because every window has a frontage and a sidage and a backage, If I may use those expressions. No, I do not think that Ethel Elton is there."

"Then, Ethel Elton is not living with her husband?"

"I cannot say; I do not know."

"Well," Dick said, wearily, "that will do, for to-night"—for night was swiftly ap-

proaching—"but, hold on. Before you go, one more question: Every man, as a rule, has a close personal friend. Do you know of any that Henley had, during his service with Elton?"

Hayman reflected a moment.

"Yes, I think he had a chum—a Mr. Hampton, who now resides, or once did, at No. — Bellone street. Whether he is there yet or not, I do not know."

"Thank you, Mr. Hayman. Here is some money; make yourself as comfortable as you can, outside of drinking. None of that, you know, now."

Then Deadwood Dick bade his *protege* good-by and Hayman departed.

Dick sat some time in deep thought, occasionally making a note on his memoranda.

"I don't know whether to trust this Hayman or not!" he muttered. "He is a sharper man than I took him to be—still, he may be all right. For money, I may be able to use him. But here, like a fool, I am disbursing money without solicitation, as it were, and seeing no return."

The next thing was to find Mr. Hampton. He took a trip that night to Bellone street, and inquired for Mr. Hampton.

He was not in—

Would probably be found at his club.

What was his club?

"Oh!" says pretty Mary, the servant, "I knows, shure, but I forgets."

Then she scratched her head a moment to rake up ideas.

"The club—the club—shure I belave it was the Onion Club he was bein' afther going to, sor. If he is not there, you'd better go to the rest of thim. Shure, it's a larkin' boy is Master Albert. He's moighty foine in his tastes, but the money he spends w'd make us both get married an' go to house-kapin', shure it would, sor!"

With this bit of information, Dick visited the Onion Club.

Hampton was not there.

And club after club was visited, without finding the man desired, until, as the detective was returning to his hotel, he was unexpectedly introduced to the very man he was looking for.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. AL HAMPTON.

DEADWOOD DICK's failure to find Mr. Al Hampton had rather annoyed him; consequently the abrupt way in which he came in contact with him was still more annoying.

He was walking toward the hotel through Grand Circus, when he abruptly came in collision with a man going in the opposite direction.

"Beg pardon!" Dick said. "I was thinking of something, rather than looking where I was going."

"You had better be more careful!" the other retorted, with a perceptible stagger, which denoted that "bug-juice" had gotten the better of him. "You're liable to get your head broke!"

"So?" retorted Dick. "Well, who's going to break it, my friend?"

"I will, if you give me any of your chin!"

"You had better go home, and have a sleep!" Dick suggested. "You are not in condition to fight with a man who knows how to use his dukes."

The other, who was dressed not unlike New York's dude, Berry Wall, eyed the detective a moment, in silence, then he walked away. He evidently doubted his own capacity.

Dick decided to keep his man in sight, and followed him to the office of the Cadillac Hotel, where the young blood got his key, and ascended by the elevator to, supposedly, his room.

As soon as he had left the office, Dick went to the desk and asked the clerk:

"Can you tell me the name of the gentleman who just got his key and went to his

room? It occurs to me I have met him before, but I cannot at the moment recall his name."

"Mr. Albert Hampton, sir."

"Ah, yes. The very man! Will you kindly send up a message to him?"

Dick then took out his pocket-pad and wrote the following:

"Hearing that you are a friend of Mr. Henry Henley, and being also his friend, I would like to see you. R. M. BRISTOL."

A hall-boy was called, and the message was sent up.

The boy came back directly with a note on delicately-perfumed paper:

"I will see you. The boy will show you up. If you are a friend of Henley's, you are a friend of mine. AL HAMPTON."

So Dick was guided up-stairs, and into Mr. Hampton's room.

Although their collision was so very recent as to dispel the idea that there would not be a mutual recognition, there appeared to be none on Hampton's part, for, seated with dressing-gown and smoking-cap in a luxurious chair, he arose, laid by his cigar, and advanced to meet his visitor.

"Mr. Bristol," he said, "I am glad to meet you, if you are a friend of Henley, for I'll swear he needs a friend about as much as any man I know of. Pray be seated."

Dick accepted the proffered chair with thanks, and also a cigar; then, after lighting it, he looked at Hampton smilingly:

"You don't seem to remember me?" he said.

"You? Ah, let me see. I—I—don't think so. By thunder!"

He leaped to his feet; then sat down again.

"You're the chap who ran into me in the Grand Circus?"

"The very same!"

"And what are you doing here? You—"

"Mr. Hampton, I came to have a few words with you; not in regard to our collision, but in reference to Mr. Henley, whom I want to find very much."

"You can't find him through me!"

"Well, maybe not. But, if you are a friend of his, you will advance his interests best by putting trust in me."

"Who are you? What are you?"

"You have my card. I am a detective."

"As I thought. What do you want of Henley?"

"I simply want to see him and have a talk with him. Not to arrest him, but to have his version of what I consider a queer case."

Hampton arose, crossed the room to a window and looked out meditatively.

Then he returned and resumed his seat.

"If I was *sure* you mean Harry harm, I'd see that you never left this room alive!" he declared.

"And I will assure you," Dick, "that I do not mean any harm to Mr. Henley, unless I find him to be the criminal which it is claimed he is, and that I have my doubts of."

"You are in the employ of Horace Elton, despicable wretch that he is!"

"Yes, nominally. A detective was sent for, and I was ordered here. I have seen Elton, had a talk with him, and must confess, have not a very favorable impression of him. The story he tells, and his animosity toward Henley, are not to my liking and have suggested that were I to believe his charge against Henley, I might be doing an innocent man an injury. Therefore, not being a man who depends for a living upon his detective work, I don't propose to do the hunted man an injustice, and would like to meet him. I have accepted no retainer from Horace Elton, and am in no way obligated to work for him."

Hampton threw away a half-smoked cigar, and lit a fresh one.

"You are at least a man!" he said, "but, I don't know! I haven't confidence in your line, myself. Horace Elton wants to find Hal to arrest him, I suppose."

"Yes."

"For what?"

"On the charge of having two wives—she who was Ethel Elton, and another whom as alleged by Horace, Henley previously married!"

"That is infamous!" Hampton cried, leaping to his feet, and pacing the floor, excitedly. "Henley was never married, until he married Ethel. I was his boon companion, and know all of his associations."

"I am not prepared to deny this," Dick said. "To tell you the truth, Horace Elton's bitter enmity toward Henley, suggested to me that the two-wife business might, indeed, be a conspiracy. That's why I want to see Henley. Then, there is another matter—the heirship of Jacob Elton; I would like to talk that over with him. Horace Elton has designs upon the fortune, and unless he is prevented, will succeed."

"And you would prevent him?"

"If I can do the rightful heir justice, and prove the will is not a forgery!"

"By Jove! you command my respect. You are Horace Elton's employee, but not his tool. Promise me one thing, and you shall see Harry Henley?"

"What do you want me to promise?"

"That you will not arrest him or betray him into the power of Horace Elton, until you are fully convinced that he *is* the criminal he is represented to be!"

"Mr. Hampton, I promise you, as a gentleman and man of honor."

"I'll trust you. Put on your hat, and come with me. You shall see Henley!"

Accordingly, they left the hotel, after a few minutes, and when they had reached the street Hampton announced:

"It will be necessary for us to take a cab."

"Do we have far to go?"

"About three miles."

"Very well. Call a cab and I will defray the expenses of the trip."

"I will do half—always do that you know, Mr. Bristol. I'm sort of a sport, myself. I have never had to work, but Hal has, and did his work well. If I were a business man, or had the slightest idea of business, you know, I'd establish one for the dear boy's benefit. Come, here's a cab."

Both entered the cab. Hampton gave the orders, and they rattled away, at a lively rate up Grand avenue.

"I hope Henley will not take offense at my fetching you there," Hampton remarked.

"I don't think he will," Dick replied. "If he and the child are heirs to old Jacob Elton's fortune, they shall have it. But, what has become of Ethel? Judging from what Horace told me, she is not with her husband."

"She is not. I would prefer not to express my opinion on the matter, even though I have one. Perhaps when you see Henley he will tell you the whole circumstances. If he don't I may express my views to you!"

Number — Ivy Place was the destination, and the cab paused in front of a pleasant looking frame cottage, painted drab, and having in front a small yard, with flower-beds and rose bushes.

Bidding the caddy to wait, Dick and Hampton rung for admission to this little residence.

The matronly lady who answered the summons, directed them up-stairs, and they entered a small but cheerfully furnished general living-room, where a man—a graceful, handsome-looking fellow, aged about twenty-five, was engaged in frying some ham and eggs, preparatory, evidently, to his evening repast.

"Ah! Al, how are you?" he cried, advancing, and extending his hand. "Anything new?"

"Yes. I have a friend with me. He is a detective, in the employment of Horace Elton!"

Harry Henley staggered back in dismay, and sunk upon a chair, a look of disgust and alarm upon his features.

"A detective," he repeated, "and from Horace Elton, my bitterest enemy? Al, you have betrayed me!"

Then the blood seemed to recede from his face, and lips more especially. He swayed in his chair, and would have fallen to the floor, but that Deadwood Dick, with a cry of alarm, sprung up and caught him, in his descent.

"Heavens, Hampton, you've killed him!" Dick cried. "You were too abrupt. Harry Henley is dead!"

It was even so; the shock had proven too much!

Hampton sprung forward with a wail of horror as he realized what had occurred, and together he and Dick carried the body to the bed and laid it upon it.

Examination proved that the man's heart had ceased to beat.

"Yes, he was troubled with heart-disease," Hampton said, wiping away his tears, "and I should have remembered it before announcing you as I did. My God! I am responsible for poor Hal's death!"

It was a long time before he could control his grief sufficiently to speak intelligibly.

"Well, what's to be done?" Dick asked. "I suppose the first thing will be to notify the landlady and then the coroner."

"Yes."

"Has Henley any money to provide for his burial, Mr. Hampton?"

"No; but I will look out for all that. I've defrayed all his expenses since his return to the States. But see here, detective, you must now help me. This poor fellow is dead, and Horace Elton will make double efforts to gobble up the fortune. He shall not have it. It belongs to Ethel, if she be living; if not, to her child, for I can prove that Jacob Elton's will was genuine. Instead of helping Horace Elton to do a wrong, will you help me to right a monstrous wrong? I am a murderer, in one sense, but to my victim's child, I will devote my life and my purse. Will you help me to baffle Horace Elton in his malevolent schemes?"

He spoke with pitiful earnestness.

"I will," Dick replied, "that is, if you believe him to be a villain, as I have had a suspicion he is."

"Come here."

He led the way to a little room adjoining, where a babe was tranquilly sleeping—a boy of a year and a half's age, and as pretty a chub as one could wish to gaze upon.

"Take this to my sister. She lives at Number — Willis avenue. Her name is Mrs. Todd. Tell her I sent you, and she will understand. I will take charge of matters here. You, being in Horace Elton's employ, had better not be known in connection with this affair. We may gain more by it!"

"True," Dick admitted. "But, to tell the truth, I do not know much about infants. See if you can't get some one to accompany me who understands the business."

"Mrs. Prince, the landlady, will accompany you, I dare say," Hampton replied, and left the room.

Within a half-hour Dick and Mrs. Prince, with little Tot (Walter) Henley, were on their way with a note to Mrs. Todd of Willis avenue, from her brother.

And the little one, on his arrival, was warmly received.

There and then Deadwood Dick more firmly made up his mind to see the Elton case through, come what might.

If Horace Elton was a viper in the grass, he was likely to run against a scythe that would behead him.

CHAPTER V.

STILL DARK.

DEADWOOD DICK did not see Hampton again the next day.

Little Tot Henley had been safely left with Mrs. Todd, and for the present was in good hands.

Before proceeding further, Dick wanted to see more of, and hear more from Hampton; so he remained quietly at the hotel.

It was full noon, the next day, when Hampton put in an appearance, accompanied by Hank Hayman.

"Bristol!" Hampton said, "you are a man after my own heart. Hayman has been telling me how much you have done for him, and now permit me to add my thanks to his."

"If I have been the means of doing any good to any one, I am sure I am very glad," Dick responded, shaking hands with both men.

"I know it, my boy, I know it, and had I been more considerate and less rash, poor Henley would not be lying in his coffin. I cannot ever forgive myself for the words that killed him. He knew Elton was his deadly enemy, and was in terror of being arrested;—not so much on his own account, as because of his profound love for his child."

"I am deeply sorry for the sad event of Mr. Henley's death, in more senses than one," Dick said, "because Death cut him off before he had a chance to vindicate himself of charges made against him. That was the reason I wished to see him before going on with the case which Horace Elton placed me in charge of. I suppose the little one is all right?"

"Oh, yes. He will not suffer while my sister has the care of him!"

"Have you called in the coroner?"

"Yes. He viewed the body, listened to our information, and issued a burial permit. He had known of Henley's affliction, and did not deem it necessary to have an autopsy made."

"Do you know whether Horace Elton is advised of the death, or not?"

"He does not know of it. Harry was living at Ivy Place under the name of Fisk—his mother's maiden name—and under that name he will be buried until we find his wife!"

"Was she truly and legally his wife?"

"She was, as this will prove, and I commit it to your care," and Hampton, drawing a leather bill-book from his pocket, extracted a document, which he handed to the detective.

"It was made out, and signed in the presence of the witnesses whose names are attached," he added, "so you can see for yourself that the marriage was valid, no matter what Horace Elton may claim."

It was a marriage-certificate, issued to Henry Henley and Ethel Elton; minister Jas. J. Moore; witnesses, Jacob Elton, Tobias Razzle, and Albert Hampton.

"Mr. Moore is dead," Hampton added, "but two of the witnesses still live, and will live, I hope, unless Horace Elton attempts and succeeds in putting them out of the way, to see all things made clear in this case."

"Do you think he would do such a thing as to plan a murder?"

I am satisfied in my own mind, that he would do any thing to gain money. He is thoroughly unprincipled, and a very dangerous man."

"Hampton," said Dick, "will you tell me what has become of Ethel Elton? Is she living or dead?"

"I do not know. Would to God I did. She suddenly disappeared, and, since then, she has not been seen or heard of."

"Tell me the circumstances."

"She and Harry had come back from Toronto, and located in Detroit, for a week, when they became aware that they were being watched. So they concluded they had better cross the line, and I sent them over to Windsor. There they lived for a few days; then, one day, when Harry was out looking for work, Ethel suddenly disappeared; no

one knew whither she went, or the cause for her going."

"How long ago was this?"

"Six weeks."

"Henley had heard nothing from her, in this time?"

"No. He became distracted, and came over here with the baby, and I sent him to the boarding place in Ivy Place, and told him to keep quiet there. I don't think he left it, up to the time of his death. In the mean time I have diligently searched for a clew that would lead to his wife's whereabouts, but found none."

"Do you think Elton may have had a hand in her disappearance?"

"I have suspected so."

"Yet have nothing on which to base your suspicions?"

"Not a thing."

Dick remained silent a moment, as if in deliberation, but he was not.

He was covertly watching Hayman.

But his study amounted to nothing.

Hayman, to all intents, was as innocent as a lamb.

"I think," said Dick after awhile, "that it is our duty to ferret the matter out!"

"I cordially agree with you there!" Hampton assented, "and I'll back my opinion with my bank account. If I judge you aright, your opinion of Elton is that he is a villain."

Dick smiled.

"Well, I am hardly prepared to say that, as I have had but one interview with him. Still, I cannot say that I like him. His particular anxiety to get hold of Jacob Elton's fortune, was, judging from his words and vicious decision, suspicious. Do you know a man named Vinton Valentine?"

"No."

"Do you know a man named Valentine Vinton?"

"Yes. He is a rich sporting man."

"He was designed as Ethel Elton's husband, by her brother?"

"I did not know that."

"Do you know where he can be found?"

"Yes, I think I could find him."

"Do so, and shadow his movements for awhile. Something may be developed, in this way. In the mean time, I will turn my attention to another direction."

"All right. I will do as you suggest. If we can defeat the infamous schemes of Horace Elton, we must leave nothing undone. At any rate, we will see that the babe has his rights."

"Is there anything I can do? I'd like to be of some use, Mr. Bristol!" Hayman now spoke.

"You can remain here for the present, and after I have had a quiet think, I'll instruct you."

"Well, then I'll be going," Al Hampton decided. "I'll finish the arrangements for poor Henley's funeral, and then hunt up Vinton, and see what I can get out of him."

"And I will go and see Elton," Dick said, "and have a talk with him. By another talk, I may be able to elicit some valuable information—obtain some important points."

So Hampton took his departure, leaving Hayman and Dick alone together.

"Now, then," remarked Dick, let me see. Have you been to your mother's place, yet, Hayman?"

"No. I've reserved my visit until you might be ready to go. I spent the forenoon in looking around town, seeing if any one would know me, but I guess I was not recognized."

"That's good. Now, while I make a call on Elton, do you think you could find a man for me?"

"Who?"

"Old Job Razzle, who used to be in the employ of Jacob Elton. You must remember him better than any one acquainted with the Eltons."

"I have already made inquiries about

him, but no one seems to have any tidings of him. However, if you wish, I'll take a turn down through the "coon" district, and see if I can find any news of him?"

"I wish you would, and report on your return. I will visit Elton, and cross-question him in regard to certain things, and come directly back so as to be here when you return. You might also drop around in the neighborhood of Jacob Elton's former place of business, and inquire, for Razzle might have been seen there. Old associations, you know, sometimes recall one to places they formerly frequented, and in that way we might get a clew. It is all important that we should find Razzle."

"You are right. I believe from what I have heard, that, as a witness to the Elton will, he will be the most wanted man in the city of Detroit, just at present."

"I certainly want to see him," Dick replied.

Hayman then departed.

"I have almost still a notion to distrust that man!" Dick mused, as he made his toilet. "Something about him causes me to regard him with distrust."

An hour later, he rung the bell of Horace Elton's house, on Brainerd street.

CHAPTER VI.

AN OVERHEARD INTERVIEW.

THE servant answered the bell after it had been rung twice.

"Mr. Elton in?" Dick asked.

"He is, but is busy. If you will step into the back parlor, I will announce you when he is over with his business matters. I believe you have called here before on business. You are Mr. Vinton?"

"No. Your memory seems to be defective!"

"Oh, I remember you now," said the servant, who was not the one who had previously admitted Bristol. "You're Mr. MacIntosh, of the Produce Exchange. Oh, I remember you right well, sir. You was the gent that gave me the fifty cents. Walk right in, sir. Soon's the master is done with the other guests he will ring for me, and then I will show you in."

What impulse it was that prompted Dick not to correct the servant's mistake as to his name he probably could not say. Anyhow, he walked in, and was ushered into the back parlor. It adjoined the front one, which now constituted Horace Elton's private reception-room or office.

"Take a seat, sir, and I will call you when Mr. Elton is at liberty," the servant said, and then retired.

The seat which Dick had chosen chanced to be close to the folding-doors that communicated with the front room, and hearing unguarded voices within which he at once recognized, it was but natural that he should listen.

"You think that Hampton is to be regarded as dangerous?" Horace Elton was saying.

"Yes, I do. He knows more about affairs than the detective does," was the answer and Hayman was the speaker.

"That does not matter so much as long as he has no suspicion where she is. You do think he does not know or suspect?"

"I'm sure he does not!"

"And he's gone to hunt up Vinton, and pump him, in hopes of finding out?"

"Yes; that was the order."

"And a lot it will be that he will get out of Vinton. Hum! you're to hunt up Job Razzle, and I'm to be visited by the detective! I must think a moment. I'm glad you came back to me, Hayman, for, although I was a little rough on you formerly, I'll do the right thing by you now. Of course, I'm not wealthy, any longer, I have lost my entire fortune in being a bear. I must have money to crowd the market. I must use other tactics. I must be a bull, for a time. Consequently, I must have Jacob Elton's fortune, to work on."

"Yes, you are right, there. But, what am I to do? Am I to wait until you have got this fortune, for my pay? I don't live on wind."

"You seem to profit well enough on wind protectors,"—with presumably a glance at Hayman's new attire.

"You didn't buy them, anyhow!" retorted Hayman.

"You bet I didn't!" said Elton. "Charities are good enough in their way, but I want to see some return, before I become charitable. However, as in your case, you have received charity from my employee, I must follow his noble example. Find, here, one hundred dollars. Next, find Job Razzle, at Number — Champlain street. Then, if he is there—well, here are your instructions. You will know how to carry them out!"

"All right. Is that all?"

"All at present."

"Well, good-day! I will call upon you when I find anything new."

What passed thereafter Dick never knew, for he quietly slid out of the back parlor and was out of the house, before Hayman.

He got upon the street ahead of the convict, and met him at the corner of Woodward avenue and Brainerd street.

Hayman wore rather a sheepish look, when he met the detective.

"Well, old man, what have you found out?" Dick inquired.

"Nothing as yet," was the reply.

"Have you been looking for Razzle?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"In the negro quarters."

"Where are they?"

"Mostly down the water front."

"You have taken a queer way of going to the water front. In fact, you have not been there, and have had no idea of going there."

Hayman stared.

"I have been there!" he declared.

"You are a liar," Dick replied. "You went to Horace Elton's house, and betrayed my confidence and my generosity to you. I overheard your conversation with Elton. I occupied the adjoining room, waiting for you to come out. Now, what have you to say for yourself?"

Hayman smiled.

"I am only too glad you *did* overhear that conversation," he said. "Just now, I told you I had been down in the negro district. I lied. I had not, but had made several inquiries, some of which I think will lead to important results. Then, says I, I'll go to Elton, represent myself as willing to serve him, find out what I can, by saying as little as I can, and transfer what information I have got to you. That is the whole long and short of it. If you overheard the interview, as you have said, you overheard nothing except what you told Elton, himself—to the effect, that, even though you were in his employ, you would see that right was done. Did you not make such an expression, or one similar?"

"I did. Did he tell you so?"

"Yes."

"And by your interview, you found out where Job Razzle is."

"Where he says he is."

"Do you know the place?"

"I used to. But I don't know anything about it, now."

"You have a letter or paper of instructions from Elton?"

"Yes."

"Let me see it."

Hayman hesitated a moment; then withdrew from his pocket an unsealed envelope, and passed it over to the detective.

"There they are," he said. "You'll see what I'm to do for Horace Elton, and yet what I'm not to do. I never yet committed a murder, nor do I expect to."

The instructions were on a bill-head, and briefly as follows:

"Find Razzle. Silence him. See Vinton, and if you think there's any liability of his squealing, silence him."

To this document, there was no signature.

"You're quite sure Elton puts faith in you that you will do this?"

"Yes."

"Do you think that Vinton will squeal?"

"No, I think he will stick to Elton—that is, if he knows anything about the case."

Dick thought a minute.

"Do you think Razzle is to be found on Champlain street?"

"Hardly. Still, he may be there. I should, were I a detective, look for him in some prominent house, as a servant, or else in the negro quarters. I didn't believe when Horace Elton told me he was on Champlain street, that he was there. Still, if you like, I'll go and see."

"All right. Do so. I don't think Elton had an idea I was in the house, during your interview with him?"

"I cannot say as to that. The servant may have told him."

"She seemed to recognize me as one MacIntosh!"

"Oh! I know him. You do look like him. In fact, when I first saw you, I thought you was he. Probably, then, the servant told Elton that MacIntosh had been in to see him."

"I presume so. Well, you go and see if you can find Razzle, and I'll look up another matter. I will take a trip up-town."

"So long. I'll do the best I can for you," Hayman assured, and then walked off.

"I'll see pretty near where you go, at all events, Mr. Hayman," Dick said to himself. Then, taking a turn, he hurried through another street, and through a cross-street, and met Hayman face to face, going—up-town.

The man stared at the detective a moment as if he could not comprehend how he had got around the block so quickly, then walked on without a word for about a block; then abruptly turned back to where Dick stood at the corner.

"You're watching me, eh?" he said menacingly; "well, watch ahead. If you wish, I will take you along with me. If anything I hate, it is to be suspected. Come along, and I will prove that my intentions are good."

And so Dick followed.

CHAPTER VII.

"MOM" HAYMAN'S AND A VISITOR.

THE direction Hayman now took was still up-town.

"I have an idea where Razzle may be working," he explained "and we will see first if he is there. If not, we will try the downtown district."

"All right," Dick simply replied.

Then, they walked on in silence.

Eventually, they turned into a narrow up-town street which Dick discovered to be Hancock street.

After a brief walk along this street, Hayman bade Dick wait upon the sidewalk while he rung the bell of a handsome-looking residence.

An elderly Irishwoman answered the summons.

"Is Mr. Razzle working here?" Hayman inquired politely.

"No, sor; nary a 'rastler in the house."

"Mr. Cabel lives here, does he not?"

"Yis, sor."

"Is he in?"

"No, sor. He'll not see any reporters, at all events. He's had enough of them."

Then the door was slammed in Hayman's face, and Hayman had nothing to do but retreat to the sidewalk.

"No use," he said. "You'll find out nothing there. The blamed Mick is a guard. Cabel is not to be seen, because there's some inquiry as to his management of a coal firm down-town. I believe Razzle is there, however, for Cabel used to be a chum of Jacob

Elton's, and took several of his servants off his hands after his death—that is, his country servants, who kept his truck-garden out near Milwaukee Junction. If Razzle ain't there, he may be at Champlain street."

So they went to Champlain street.

The house was an old rookery. It had evidently been built many years before, when bricks were not a commodity in Detroit.

The lower floor was a store, occupied as a grocery, a hallway opening to a stairway, at one side.

"You can inquire in the grocery," Hayman said, "or up-stairs, as you like—it's no difference to me. If he is around here, something ought to be found out about him."

"I'll try up-stairs," Dick decided.

The tenants proved to be all negroes, but none of them except one appeared to know anything about Razzle.

"Yes, he lived here about two weeks," she stated, "but all of a sudden he went away, and has not come back, yet, though he left what clothes he had, here. I have been worried a good deal about him."

"Have you any idea what caused him to go away, madam?"

"No more than that two gentlemen called for him—that is one well-dressed man, and t'other one a rough."

"What is the latter one's name?"

"Val Vinton!"

"I understood he was a sporting gentleman?"

"Sporting bla'guard! He is rich, but a foul-mouthed bla'guard."

"Who was with him, when they took Razzle away?"

"I believe his name was Ellis, or something like that."

"Was it Elton?"

"Yes. That's it. I remember now. Yes, Mr. Elton."

"Do you know where they took Razzle?"

"No more dan de man in de moon."

"Do you know what they wanted him for?"

"No, I don't. He had a room here, but I don't know nuffin' more 'bout him, 'cept he 'peared to be a nice old chap—very quiet-like."

So Dick left the place, and met Hayman on the sidewalk in front of the grocer.

"No news here, except Razzle did live here but went away in a hack, in company with two men," the ex-convict remarked.

"Did you learn who the two men were?"

"No."

"I did. I found out that he went away with Val Vinton and Elton, and I am satisfied that they meant him no good. I am fearful that harm has befallen the poor old ducky! If so, I'll know at whose door to lay the charge. Now, I'll wait until Hampton has a report to make. In the mean time, we might run down to your mother's place, and I'll take a look at her coterie of satellites."

"I don't think you'll find out anything in that direction," Hayman said, "but there is no harm in trying."

So to Larned street they made their way.

Old Mom Hayman's house proved to be a long two-story and attic frame building, of the tumble-down sort, weather-beaten and rickety with age. Some of the window panes were gone, and their places filled with bundles of old clothes, while the door opening into the saloon had evidently been battered and jammed during many a fracas.

Over the door was a dingy sign, bearing the inscription, "Mom Hayman, Saloon."

The saloon windows had been painted over white, so that no one could look in, from the outside.

Dick took in all these points before he and Hayman entered.

The interior of the saloon proved to be even worse than the exterior. It was a large room, supplied with a bar and common deal tables, a rusty old stove, and plenty of

dirt, the walls and ceiling being grimy with age, and the plastering off in numerous places.

Behind the bar presided a tall, raw-boned woman, of vicious aspect, with iron gray hair, and a livid scar across one cheek.

In front of the bar were two brutal-looking wretches.

Old Mom Hayman surveyed her visitors critically, as they entered, and approached the bar.

Evidently, she did not know her son, for she gave no token of recognition.

"Give us some of your best whisky!" Hayman said, laying down thirty cents on the counter.

"Don't keep whisky!" was the snappish retort. "Only got a license to sell beer and wine."

"Oh! I reckon you can rake up some red-eye," Hayman insisted. "You ought to even kill a fatted calf on your son's return!"

The woman stared a moment as if in great surprise, and then extended her hand.

"Why, Hank, is that you?" she ejaculated. "You've changed so, I would ha' known ye. When d'ye git back, boy?"

"To-day, an' we're dyin' for a drink. So trot out some whisky."

Old "Mom" produced a black neck bottle and two glasses, and placed them on the counter.

"I don't sell to every one!" she said, "but, I reckon you're all right. Who's your partner?"

"A chap from Joliet. He's goin' to help me make it warm for Horace Elton!"

"Well, I'm glad for that. He's a dirty villain! Where'd you get the new togs?"

"Oh! I got 'em!" Hank replied, with a wink.

As he and Dick touched their lips to the vile decoction called whisky, another party entered the saloon.

He was a tall, well-built, full-faced man, with blonde side-whiskers, and handsome eyes—in fact, being well-dressed, he was an attractive looking personage in all respects.

He gave Dick and Hank Hayman a searching glance, as he advanced to the bar.

"A shappen of wine, please!" he said.

"How is things?"

"All right, so far!" Mom replied, with a covert glance at her son and Dick, "but, I can't have it any longer. Either you must pay up or move!"

"Seems to me you're getting mighty cranky," the fellow said, and gulping down his wine, he paid for it, and left the saloon.

"What's he doing here?" Hayman then demanded of his mother.

"Oh! he's had a room here for some time, but got in arrears for rent, and he'll have to go, as I've already rented the room. So he'll have to move."

"Have you got a room left for me?"

"No, not a one. You'll have to go some'r's else. Every room I have in the house is rented, even to the cellar. Besides, it would be safer for ye to go somewhere's else, fer if you were to hang out around here, most likely you'd be watched."

"Well, that's so, I guess."

"Come along, Hawkins. We'll want to be lookin' around for another place."

And purchasing a cigar for each, Hayman and Dick took their departure.

"The old woman never cared much for me!" the ex-convict said, when the two had gained the street. "She's close-fisted, and I never could live with her from the time I was a kid, 'thout payin' full price."

"I should say that was singular. By the way, you made no inquiry about Razzle!"

"Certainly not!"

"And why not?"

"Because, I've got an idea. The old woman don't want me there; yet I could draw more custom in a day than she could in a week. There's something crooked going on, or I miss my guess."

"I thought you told me your mother was honest?"

"I have never known different, although her trade is pretty tough. But, she's got the boodle, and that's more than equal to police protection. Something has happened that has opened my eyes."

"What is that?"

"You saw the chap with the side-whiskers, that drank the wine?"

"Yes."

"Do you know who he was?"

"No."

"That was Val Vinton."

"The deuce you say! And what was he doing there?"

"Give it up. You heard what the old woman said?"

"You bet I did, and inwardly commented that a well-dressed man of that sort should hang out amidst such surroundings."

"Just so. That's what knocked me out. Vinton, I understand, is rich; has money in the bank; owns several houses, and has a regular income from some other source. He would hardly be the man to occupy a room in my mother's place, with its poor furniture and worse accommodations, it strikes me, unless he had some pretty good reason for it. What do you think about it?"

"My very idea. I noticed that he flashed us a suspicious glance when we were at the bar, and the guarded remark of your mother did not escape my attention either."

"Well, have you got an opinion?"

"Yes—that either Razzle or Ethel Elton are imprisoned in that house!"

"It may be. At any rate, it wouldn't be any harm to keep a lookout. The old woman is penurious, and there's no telling what she might not do for money. The longer I live, it seems to me, the less faith I have in women. Men may be going to the dogs at a trot, but it looks to me that women are going to the devil at a gallop!"

"There may be more truth in that than fiction," Dick laughed. "At all events, it may be well to watch your mother's place. We must devise some good plan that is original, however, for if my judgment counts for anything she's not a sleepy-head!"

"No, you bet she's not!"

"Well, we'll go back to the hotel, see if Hampton has got back yet with a report, and then we'll put our heads together and see what we can do in the way of devising a plan."

"You trust me now, eh?"

"Implicitly, and I hope you'll forgive my suspicions of you."

"Certainly. It was but natural, I suppose, after my visit to Elton's!"

"Well, I admit I was a trifle suspicious. But let that drop. Let's go to the hotel."

And thither they went.

When they reached it, Hayman said:

"You'd better go in first. It is possible that Horace Elton may be there, and, if so, it wouldn't be very good policy for us to be seen together, as it would probably arouse his suspicions as to my constancy for him."

"Jove! you are right there!" Dick declared. "If you don't see me pretty soon, you'll know that I have found Elton waiting for me, though it is hardly probable, for I don't think I told him what hotel I was stopping at."

But, sure enough, when Dick entered the hotel, he found Horace there waiting for him, as Hayman had prophesied. Elton was looking over the register.

CHAPTER VIII.

HAMPTON'S REPORT.

THE moment Elton saw Dick, he came forward with extended hand.

"I've just been looking you up," he said, "for I was anxious to learn how you were making out."

"Slowly."

"Have you found Razzle?"

"No, nor traces of him."

"Nor Henley?"
 "Henley is dead, and presumably buried."
 "The deuce! Who told you this?"
 "I learned it from a former friend of his named Hampton."
 "When did he die?"
 "A few days ago. I was not able to get as many particulars as I would have liked."
 "And Ethel?"
 "I have been unable to find a trace of her yet."
 "How about the babe?"
 "That you will have to see Hampton about. He might give you some information, as he knows more about the matter than any one else. He's a reticent fellow, and, being a friend of Henley's, is not inclined to give away much."
 "What is his attitude toward me?"
 "Not very favorable, you can bet. He evidently intends to fight for the fortune, in behalf of the boy, since there is no trace of Ethel."
 "All the good it will do him. Have you seen Val Vinton?"
 "Once, but did not get a chance to speak to him."
 "Where is Hayman?"
 "Hayman?—Hayman? Let me see. I don't seem to remember that you mentioned that name to me."
 "Maybe not. But just the same you met him, questioned him about me, and clothed him up like a gentleman, and— Well, what did you gain by it?"
 "Blamed little. Did he come to you and tell you this?"
 "Yes."
 "The infernal skunk! I took pity on him because he was so dirty and ragged, and gave him a lift, and then made a few inquiries of him. If I catch him it will be the worse for him, you bet!"
 "Better not fool around him much, for he's a hard nut!"
 "Oh, I'm not afraid of him!"
 "Well, when you find out anything new, call around and let me know."
 "Very well, I will do so. I've had a long tramp of it to-day, with but little result. I'll try again to-morrow, however, and see what I can do."
 "Do so. I'll call around to-morrow night, providing I don't see you during the day."
 Then Mr. Elton buttoned up his coat, and took his departure.
 Directly afterward Hank Hayman walked into the hotel office, and met Dick.
 "Didn't I tell you so?" he said, triumphantly. "Something told me you would find him here. What did he have to say?"
 "Oh, he tried to pump me, but didn't gain much by it. I sent him off about as well informed as when he came! He told me of your call, and I blackguarded you in good shape."
 "But come; let's go to supper, and then we will have a talk. By that time, Hampton will most likely put in an appearance."
 They accordingly entered the *cafe*, and after a hearty meal they repaired to Dick's room, where they found Hampton applying for admittance.
 "Ah! Back again?" Dick accosted.
 "Yes, and nearly fagged out!" was the reply. "I've been on the go nearly ever since morning!"
 They entered Dick's room, and, lighting their cigars, sat down to compare notes.
 "Well, friend Hampton, how have you succeeded?" Dick asked.
 "Not as well as I could have hoped. I had poor Henley's body temporarily placed in a vault in the nearest cemetery, pending our finding of Ethel, if we do find her. Then I set to work to discover Vinton's whereabouts, and finally located him at the Detroit Club. I kept shady, and waited, and when he came out I followed him. He led me a long chase, but at length slowed up at a tough saloon on River street, outside of

which he held a confab with an equally tough citizen, whom I know of as Mike McMuck!"
 "Mike McMuck?" echoed Hank Hayman.
 "You bet! Do you know him?"
 "I should say I do! He used to room in my mother's house on Larned street—he and Cynthia. She was a shoplifter, and has done time."
 "You mean Mom Hayman's, in Larned street?" Hampton asked.
 "The same place!"
 "Do you know whether they live there now or not?"
 "No."
 "Well," pursued Hampton, "after a few minutes' conversation with McMuck, I followed Vinton to Mom Hayman's, in Larned street, and saw him enter. I did not follow suit. But, when he came out again, after a few seconds, I shadowed him back to the club, where I left him!"
 "We have our suspicions confirmed!" Dick remarked, addressing Hayman.
 Then to Hampton he narrated their experiences of the afternoon.
 "Humph! I'll wager a cool hundred we've struck a clew!" Hampton declared. "The circumstances surely point that way, eh?"
 "I think so!" Dick assented. "Vinton's interview with McMuck, and subsequent visit to Larned street, coupled with his cautious inquiry of Hayman's mother, seems to indicate that there's screw loose, somewhere. And, what is more natural for us to believe than that Ethel or Job Razzle are imprisoned in that old den?"
 "One, and maybe both!" Hampton suggested. "I feel morally sure of it. What is your opinion, Hayman?"
 "The same as yours!" the ex-convict replied. "At any rate, it wouldn't do any harm to keep an eye on the place. The question is, how to do it. I'm known there, and given a hint that I'm not wanted. At any rate, I cannot have a room there, and if I were to hover around the neighborhood, I'd be suspected of being a spy, in case there's any thing crooked going on. Seems to me Mr. Bristol ought to be able to devise some scheme!"
 "Easier said than done!" Dick declared. "It may be easy enough to devise a scheme, but more difficult to execute it. However, if I have the co-operation of both of you, I can. I think I can arrange to watch Mom Hayman's house, night and day."
 "You can depend on me!" Hampton hastened to say. "For any service bearing upon the finding of Ethel, you can freely command me!"
 "Here, too!" echoed Hayman earnestly.
 "Well, then, I think I can arrange it. I am an adept, if I do say it, in making up disguises, and, having a good stock with me, I can no doubt disguise either of you beyond all chance of recognition. Now, which of you can sing?"
 "Put me down for that!" Hayman promptly responded. "I used to belong to a negro minstrel troupe, some years ago, singing baritone, in the first part, and plunking the banjo in the olio. It didn't pay, however, so I quit. I can play any thing from a jews harp to a violin, or from a hand organ to a monkey, or cornet to a broom-stick fiddle. I've got a full stock of musical moke articles in pawn—all except a hand organ, a piano, and so forth."
 "Excellent! The very thing! We will get the things, and make you a wandering minstrel, in numerous make-ups, and your business will be principally around the neighborhood of Mom Hayman's."
 "Good! The racket is well worth trying, for wandering minstrels generally fare well, in that neighborhood. If you can arrange for the disguises, and let me have money enough to get my instruments I can carry out the rest."
 "Very well. How much will it cost you to get your things, do you think?"

"Sixty dollars," at least.
 "Can you get them out to-night?"
 "Yes, if I hurry."
 "Well, here is the money. Come around first thing in the morning, and I'll fix you out."
 "All right. I'll be here."
 "By the way, is there any place opposite your mother's where a furnished room could be obtained, do you think?"
 "Yes. There is a furnished-room house, directly opposite."
 After Hayman had taken his departure, Hampton said:
 "Now, then, what am I to do?"
 "Well, that depends somewhat upon what you can do. I don't suppose you know anything about sailor's life, do you?"
 "On the contrary, I do. I ran away, when I was a kid, and crossed the ocean once, on a sailing vessel. My father brought me back, but I ran away again, and worked upon a vessel plying on the great lakes, where I remained until my father died, when I succeeded to his fortune, and left the water for good."
 "You understand sailor's phraseology, then?"
 "Ay! ay! like a book!"
 "Have you a sailor's suit?"
 "Yes, several of them."
 "Then, how would you like to tog out in such a costume, visit Mom Hayman's, spend some money among the gang, and see if you can't get a room there. If they see you've plenty of sugar, you will most likely succeed, and in this way you will be able to make some observations. I'll furnish the money."
 "The idea is a capital one. If Mom Hayman is crooked, she will undoubtedly hail the arrival of a sailor with a fat purse, with pleasure. But, you will not advance a cent of money. You've already done more than your share, and now it is my turn. Poor Henley is dead, and if money is of any account, his widow can draw upon me, as I am rich!"
 "All right," Dick replied. "Pardon me, but I suspect you may have an eye out for the future."
 Hampton colored.
 "Oh! I don't know about that. Ethel and I were quite intimate at one time!"
 "Well, we will find her, if we can. Now, if you will, you can go and fix yourself up, and drop in upon Mom Hayman, to-night. You may elicit some information, anyhow. If you can't get accommodations there, you'll probably be able to find 'em across the street. Go well armed, and look out not to get drugged. You'll see Hayman around, to-morrow, in the guise of a musician, and perhaps I'll call, too, in one disguise or another. If I do, I'll manage to give you a signal, so that you will know who I am."
 "All right. I'll be off. I feel sure of success, as a sailor, as I know all the ropes, and I'll play the character of Jack Tar in good shape."
 "I hope you'll be careful. You're going among a rough crowd!"
 "Oh! I'm not afraid. I was used to that class of society, only a short time ago, before I got my fortune. Well, so long! I will be at Mom Hayman's within two hours' time."
 After he was gone Dick quietly left the hotel, and went to Larned street, where, opposite Mom Hayman's, he rented a second story furnished room.
 "Here, I can also watch, at intervals," he mused, "and I want to specially see what Hampton will look like, when he comes along!"
 And, it was not long ere he had an opportunity of gratifying his curiosity.

CHAPTER IX.

A "RACKET" AT MOM HAYMAN'S.
 THERE was but one front door to Mom Hayman's establishment, that led into the saloon.

The remainder of the frontage of the long building was gloomy, and forbidding of aspect, when Dick took up his vigil at the single window of his room.

It was a rough-looking crowd that entered the old crone's establishment, and left it, and those who came out were invariably in a hilarious condition.

The street, at this point, was dimly lighted by a single lamp, whose flickering rays were little more than a spark in the darkness of the night.

Still, Dick had no difficulty in recognizing Hampton when he came lurching along in his sailor guise.

He was in the regulation attire of an ordinary seaman, and walked with the seaman's peculiar swaying swagger—perhaps a little more so than was natural, to give the impression that he was somewhat "groggy."

He was greatly altered in appearance, his face being now smoothly shaven, and, with his nautical attire, his most intimate friend would hardly have recognized him.

He lunched up to Mom Hayman's resort, and, opening the door, entered.

Dick kept up his vigil for an hour, and then, as there was no sign of Mr. Jack Tar's reappearance he locked his room, and went back to the hotel, where, thoroughly fatigued with his day's work, he put in a night of sound repose.

He was up betimes in the morning, prepared for the events of another day.

Shortly after breakfast Hayman put in an appearance, accompanied by an expressman with a long trunk. This trunk was transported to Dick's room, where the ex-minstrel exhibited his numerous musical possessions.

There was a banjo, flute, cornet, violin, concertina, dulcimer, tambourine, set of bones, musical teapot and cuspidor, one stringed-fiddle on a broom-handle, musical glasses, and several odd musical instruments of which Dick knew not even the names.

"And do you mean to say you can wrestle music out of all these?" he demanded.

"Every one of them. Shall I give you an illustration, for instance?"

"No, you needn't mind, just now. I am quite satisfied to take your word for it. What instruments are your favorites?"

"The banjo, the concertina and dulcimer. I can work the latter two in one disguise, and the banjo in another, and the cornet in another."

"Well, try the concertina first. Music in a saloon generally attracts custom, and the keepers like it. After that you can try your banjo in black-face, and then, if I can rent one, I'll hire a hand-organ and send you out as an Italian, for I want to have both an inside and outside view of the shebang."

"All right. Then I'll try the concertina racket first. If that don't fetch the bums, why I'll paralyze 'em when I strike up a nigger song, to the accompaniment of the old banjo."

"What disguise do you want for your concertina role?"

"I've got the cute togs for that role. As for my face, I'll let you attend to that."

He then produced a rusty old valise from his music-box, and from it extracted a long blue soldier's coat and cap, and a pair of brogans, run down at the heel, and of extra size.

"Now, while I'm getting into these things, do you suppose you can find me a crutch?" he asked. "The worse looking it is, the better it will suit the purpose."

"I will try," Dick replied. "I think I've seen an old curiosity shop, not far off. Maybe I might find what you want there."

So he quitted the hotel, and sought the shop he had mentioned—a sort of junk and miscellaneous store, where one could find a collection of cast-off articles of nearly every description.

Sure enough, here he found an old crutch, that had, no doubt, seen a good many years service

When he returned to the Cadillac House, he at once sought the head clerk.

"Mr. Feval," he said, "if you see a man dressed in veteran soldier costume, leave and enter your hotel, carrying this crutch and a concertina, I hope you will have no apprehensions that he is not all right, and please instruct your employees likewise. He is my detective partner, Mr. Hayman, in disguise. We are working up a case together. As an earnest that everything is all right, I will make a deposit with you, if you like."

"Oh, certainly not, Mr. Bristol!" the clerk hastened to say. "We know you are all right, and that is sufficient guarantee. You are well known by reputation to both Messrs. Van Est and Graves, they having traveled extensively in the West. However, if you like, I will instruct a porter to show you how to get in and out of the house, and not attract the attention you naturally would by passing out by the main entrances."

"Capital idea!" Dick replied. "You couldn't have pleased me better."

So a porter was called, and showed Dick the servants' entrance and exit, and Dick gave the hall-boy a password, by which any one, no matter how disguised, could be recognized as in his service.

Then he went up to his own room, and found Hayman, and a most ludicrous object he was.

This is how he was arrayed.

A pair of patched army-blue pants, a cotton shirt, with a red bandanna handkerchief tied around his neck, the big soldier's overcoat, an infantry cap to match, and brogans on his feet, which reached only high enough to expose the fact that the pair of socks he wore were not mates.

He had arranged a green shade over his left eye, and painted his nose until it looked the color of a budding spring rose. More, he had clipped off his mustache, so that it presented the appearance of a two weeks' stubble, and his left leg at the knee was padded out so as to represent a big swelling.

A more deplorable looking wreck would be hard to imagine.

Dick gazed at his adjutant a moment in utter amazement, then burst out into a hearty laugh.

"Well, you'll do!" he said. "You don't need any further make-up. Your own mother wouldn't know you. You're certainly the worst-looking wreck I ever laid eyes upon!"

"I'm a veteran, and a victim of the late war!" Hayman replied, in a whining voice, "and I have no way to live, except with my little concertina. Will you kindly listen, sir?"

Then he struck off upon the concertina, playing a number from "Il Trovatore," and winding up with "Home, Sweet Home," with variations. He next played several lively pieces, including "Money Musk," "The Irish Washerwoman," and several modern "jig" airs, finishing by doffing his cap, and extending it toward his auditor, for alms.

Dick dropped a half-dollar into it, with a laugh, and said:

"There! That will buy you a drink or two. Now, come! You'd better go and charm the *habitués*, for awhile. Don't be startled if you find Hampton there. I shall also probably be around, during the day."

So Dick conducted him out of the hotel, and then returned to his room.

He now sat down, thought matters deliberately over, from the beginning of the case, up to the present time, and mused:

"Well, I don't see but affairs are working as well as can be expected, for the present, and there don't seem to be much for me to do, until the Hayman shebang is investigated. I'd like to see how my two allies are coming on. So I reckon I'll drop around there!"

He proceeded to disguise himself, using

the same make-up that had stood him in so well as a Jew pawnbroker, in Leadville.

It required some time to accomplish this disguise, so as to make it proof against detection, but it was at last perfected. Then he set out for Larned street, and in due time he reached Mom Hayman's place, and entered.

The scene that met his vision was decidedly different from what he had seen on his first visit. There was quite a gathering of patrons, of both sexes, and while the men were roughly dressed, and treacherous-looking, some of the female *habitués* were rather comely of appearance.

A number of bibulous customers stood at the bar, and old Mom was bustling about, busily, waiting on them.

From the expression upon her ugly face, Dick inferred that that was an unusual run of custom for her establishment, and she was somewhat elated.

Sailor Al Hampton was seated at a table, in one corner, playing eucher with one of the female patrons, and, at the same time, spinning her yarns about his incredible but wonderful sea voyages.

Hayman, the minstrel, was not about.

There chanced to be one unoccupied table, and Dick seated himself at this, and, taking a German newspaper from his pocket, ostensibly began its perusal.

"Hello! what you want over there, Levi?" bawled Mom Hayman, from behind the bar.

"Mine goot lady, if you vil be so kind, you may pring one bottle of Rhine wein!" Dick replied, taking off his spectacles, and wiping them with his handkerchief.

"Hain't got no Rhine wine," Mom retorted. "Don't keep sich slops. Got nothing but whisky, gin and ale. Which d'ye want?"

"Vel, den I vil take a little chin, if you please, and a cigar, and vil you pe so kind as to ask der ladies and shendlemen vil dey take something wid me?"

Old Mom started. So did the crowd.

Such generosity was hitherto unknown in the resort, where the majority of the patrons, as a rule drank five-cent "hummers." Consequently it was no wonder they were astonished.

Old Mom eyed the ex-pawnbroker a moment, half suspiciously, as if she were in doubt whether he was able to pay for a treat, or not, but he wore a heavy gold chain, a handsome diamond pin, a shiny new plug hat, and outside of the fact that he was no beauty, he was respectable in appearance.

Now Old Mom was a sagacious woman, if she was any thing, and she was equally the last one to let a stray penny slip through her fingers.

"That's no common sheeny," she inwardly commented, and immediately began to serve the order.

She first gave Dick a bumper of the best gin the establishment afforded—and poor enough it was—then she served the rest.

"Mine frients, here ish mine regards!" Dick said, rising. "I hope vot you vill drink vid much heartiness!"

Then, he tossed off his glass, resumed his seat, settled the bill, and returned to his paper, of which he understood not a word.

The crowd was nonplused. Many exchanged significant glances, and then resumed their respective conversations, or games of cards, as the case might be.

Presently Sailor Hampton lunched over from his corner, and slapped the Hebrew on the shoulder.

"Ahoy! there shipmate," he cried, "how you was? You're a mack'el after my own style, bla'st my timbers if you ain't. I'm a tough young salt, as has traveled the seas over, but I've got a heart in me, big's a bulwark. I like to see a feller as ain't afraid to spend a cent for fun. Have a drink with me, you old shark?"

While this was being uttered, the two look-

ed hard at each other, and the recognition was mutual.

"Mine frient, I pees only too proud to meet dose brave boys vot travels dose perils of de vaters!" Dick replied, rising, and shaking hands. "I vil take a little chin!"

"That's the kind! You've got the buck-bone. Every solid tar takes his grog, instead of the bilge-water they call beer!" Set 'em up, Samantha, set 'em up—all around, too, mind ye!"

Then, Hampton lurched back to his corner.

The action was so perfect and deceptive that Dick was really afraid that his deputy was getting intoxicated.

The drinks were set up, and paid for, and old Mom Hayman was jubilant.

As each round brought her in two dollars, it is no wonder. Such a run of custom her old shanty had rarely ever known.

Nor did the fun stop here, for the sailor and the Jew were beginning to understand each other.

First Dick would set up the drinks; then Hampton would return the compliment. And thus it went, round after round.

But, unnoticed to the crowd, neither of the "treaters" touched their liquor after the first two drinks.

Both seemed to know the same trick. By a deft movement, the liquor either went against the wainscoting or into a spittoon.

Things began to grow hilarious, when there came a temporary check.

The door opened, and in walked Hayman, crutch, concertina, and all.

He doffed his shabby cap in a respectful manner, which seemed to silence the hubbub, to hear what he said:

"Kind friends, I am a poor old soldier, of the late rebellion. I have no home or friends, and all I have to depend upon for my daily bread is the few pennies I can pick up with the aid of my concertina. Can I play for you?"

"No!" roared Mom Hayman. "Git, or I'll fire a bottle at you!"

"Dare to, and blast my timbers, I'll make you regret it! We're spending the money in this fo'castle to-day, and the crew is happy. Walk in, old vet, and have some grog!" cried Hampton, springing to his feet, "and if any one tries to prevent ye, we'll string him to a yard-stick!"

Dick nodded approvingly.

"Py der veepin' Rachel, dot ish sol!" he asseverated, also. "Any mon vot pen a soltyer in der war, ish velcome to dose courtesies or goot society! Valk in, mine frient. Ve will haf some of dot music!"

"Thank you, good strangers, but if the lady of the house forbids, my sense of respect for ladies will not allow me to play for you."

Old Mom had slunk back, abashed, angered, and ashamed, all at once.

She did not want to lose the loose change of her two well-paying customers, so she said rather ungraciously:

"Oh, play away, sir, if my guests desire it. I did not know they did."

Thus invited, Hayman took a seat at the table opposite the disguised detectives.

"Ladies and gentlemen, what shall it be?" he asked, removing the concertina from the box—and a handsome instrument it was. "Shall it be a song?"

"No! no! dot vas no goot!" interposed Dick, who was afraid Mrs. Hayman might recognize her son's voice. "I vill tell you v'ot we do! Ve will have a drink, Simon—dot vas me—and den we clear dose tables von side of de room to, and haf a little quick moosic, und der ladies can dance. How dot vas, hey?"

"Hurra!" shouted Hampton.

And the others gave vent to cries of approval.

Mom Hayman could not well have withheld her sanction, if she had wished, as long

as the mighty dollar was dropping into her coffers at regular intervals.

It would not do to let this chance for sor-did gain slip by, so she acquiesced, smilingly, and the drinks were then served all around.

Then the tables were removed to either side of the room, Hayman struck up a waltz, and the male and female *habitués* of Mom Hayman's entered fully into the spirit of the dance.

Neither Dick nor Hampton had offered to join in, but Hampton came over and took a seat beside Dick. The noise of the two-thirds-tipsy dancers, gave them a chance to converse in an undertone.

Mom Hayman was staggering about behind the bar, endeavoring to wash up the glasses.

"What have you found out?" Dick asked in an undertone.

"Not much. I got a room, but didn't get a chance to look around, as the halls were dark as Phœbus, and I had no matches nor even a candle, so I couldn't go groping around, and run the risk of getting my head broke. I think the girl is here, however."

"Any grounds for your suspicions?"

"Yes. I left the saloon about two o'clock in the morning, then asked to be shown to my room. The old woman showed me into it, and abruptly closed the door and went away with the light."

"By the faculty of feeling, however, I managed to find the bed, and tumbled onto it and went to sleep. I don't know how long I slept, but it was still inky dark when I was awakened by a piercing shriek. I cannot say whether it was that of a woman or not—it might have been a tug whistle on the river."

"But it sounded human. I listened, but heard no more, so I went to sleep again. In the morning I was awakened early, and ordered down-stairs, as the bed had to be made!"

Just then the door opened.

"Vinton and Elton!" quickly whispered Hampton. "Pretend to be half asleep!"

And they did so. But they saw and heard.

CHAPTER X.

"EUCHERED."

It was indeed Elton and Vinton who entered the saloon, both well-attired, regular fops, as it were, compared with the remainder of the gang there assembled.

Dick and Hampton watched and listened, but, to all intents and purposes, they were asleep.

The two "bloods" reviewed the riotous scene for a moment in silence; then they turned to the counter against which Mom Hayman was now leaning.

"What the dogs does this mean?" Elton demanded, fiercely.

"Oh! they're all having a good time," Mom answered, stolidly. "What's it *your* business anyhow?"

"A great deal. Who got 'em drunk?"

"The sailor. He had some boodle, and he's not been afraid to blow it in."

Elton and Vinton then gave the sailor an inspection. He was, seemingly, sound asleep.

"A feller jest off the Superior line," Mom explained.

"Who's the sheeny?" asked Vinton.

"Dunno. He wandered in awhile ago, and got full's a goat. Oh, I'll chuck 'em out soon!"

"You're in fine condition to put any one out!" growled Elton. "If you don't look out for the place better than this, you'll get put out yourself! Now, then, you've started the thing, keep it a-going, but fire out that sailor and Jew. The others may dance. Give me the key."

The old woman braced up, and her sunken eyes flashed fire!

"You can't have it!" she declared, with the peculiar stubbornness born of drink. "Everything is all right. So, go away, and leave me alone. I know what I am about!"

"You don't; you're drunk. I want to see that everything is all right. Give me that key, or out of here you go, to-morrow morning!"

The old hard case gave up the key, but it was with no good grace.

Elton immediately left the saloon by one of several side doors, followed by Vinton. One of the apparent sleepers saw which door it was.

When the couple had well gone out of her sight, the old woman's face presaged danger.

Dick was tempted to "wake up" and tackle her then, but concluded that it was policy to leave her alone for the present.

But they were not long destined to prolong this farce, for a few minutes later Mom staggered over from the bar, and cried:

"Come! come! no sleeping here. Take the Jew with you, for he's not fit to go out to-night. Come, now! wake up!" This to Hampton.

"Yes! I'll go to bed. Come, Simons! let's go up and turn in!" Hampton said, brightening up.

"All right, mine fine poy, I vil oxcept of your kind hospitality!" Simons agreed, rising with a stagger, and rubbing his eyes. "Ve will haf a nap, hey, an' den come down and go to pizness. I neffer feel so funny v'ot I feel now. Py shimminy gracious," looking at his watch, "id vas not night yet. Vel, we go lay down anyhow!"

"Come along, old shark!" growled Hampton. "Get yer sea-legs on you, an' come along."

"But, hold on my dear poy. Don't pe in such a hurry. You vas enough to drive von crazy."

Then turning to old Mom:

"Do ve owe you anything, madam?"

"No! Get off to bed," was the short retort. "You know the way, sailor?"

"I guess so!"

Then, arm in arm, the two apparently drunken fools staggered out of the room, leaving by the same door that Elton and Vinton had.

They found themselves in a dirty little ante-room, from which a rickety staircase ascended to the next floor.

Up this they climbed, and entered a small room to the left, closing the door behind them. The room's only furniture was a cot-bed and two wooden chairs.

"Sit down," Hampton said. "We must wait here until those two villains go down stairs again."

So they became seated.

"Do you think they suspected us?" Dick inquired.

"Pooh! no. If they had, there'd been some fun in the saloon of a different sort from that we've been having. How much are you out of pocket by this racket?"

"I don't know. Twenty dollars, perhaps!"

"I shouldn't wonder. Things jingled, as jingle they should, for awhile. Never mind! Whether we ever find Ethel or not, every cent of your expenditures, and more besides, will be refunded, bet your life on that! But, I say, we worked the racket pretty nice, eh?"

"Better even than I anticipated. Hayman ain't doing bad, either."

"He's not. He tumbled, immediately. He's O. K., and no mistake! But for him things might have worked differently. Humph! hear the fools shake their heels!"

"Yes. Did you notice how Mom flared up?"

"Yes. She's ours, if worked right."

"I think I can fix it. I am sure Ethel or Razzle are in this house!"

"No doubt of it."

"Is there another exit than that through the saloon?"

"Not that I am aware of. There may be. 'Sh!"

Heavy footsteps were heard coming along a hallway—those of two men.

"Elton and Vinton!" Dick said. "They are going down-stairs. Quick! let's tumble onto the bed, and feign sleep!"

No quicker said than done.

And none too soon.

The footsteps paused at Hampton's door, which was cautiously opened.

Both detectives were snoring—sleeping off their debauch, apparently.

"Oh! they're all right!" Vinton's voice proclaimed. "We need not bother our heads about them in the least!"

Then the footsteps went on and descended the stairs into the saloon.

"Now, then!" Dick ordered, "let's explore. Divide this sheet in two and muffle our feet!"

They did so, and left the room.

The hall was a narrow one, and there were rooms on either side of it.

"You will observe," Hampton said, "that there are no locks to these doors. The gang down-stairs all live here. I doubt if we find a room occupied. There must, however, be one room with a lock, for Elton demanded a key."

They moved noiselessly along, examining each door and listening as they went.

No sounds of life issued from any of the rooms.

At the extreme end of the long hall, they found a door facing them that possessed a lock.

But the door was ajar!

Opening it, they were not a little surprised to find in front of them a stairway leading into a rear court and down to and adjoining a livery stable—for there were various conveyances stored under sheds in the court.

"I'll bet my shirt we're dished!" Dick grimly declared. "However, let's examine the attic."

So they ascended another flight of stairs, and examined it.

Only one room here was locked and that was from the outside with a padlock. The door and its casings were thick and heavy, and immeasurably stronger than any of the others.

"I allow this is the place we are looking for," Dick remarked.

Then he rapped upon the door, once—twice—thrice.

But no answer came from within.

"We must see what is in the room, at all events!" Dick decided, examining the staple in the casing. "Look around, and see if you can find anything to pry this out with."

Hampton soon found a poker, and with this the job was accomplished.

The room was empty, save the furniture.

There was but one window, and that was nailed down, and there were iron bars on the outside.

The sash was of iron, and the panes of glass were so heavy that it would literally have taken a sledge-hammer to have broken them.

There were evidences, however, that the room had been recently occupied.

The bed was unmade; there was dirty water in the wash-bowl, and several articles of female wearing apparel were found in a closet.

One of these Hampton recognized.

It was a plush sacque, with gold buttons.

"Bristol, she has been here!" he said, tears springing to his eyes. "This is Ethel's sack. See! Here's the name, in indelible ink on the white satin lining. She has been here, but these hell-hounds have just spirited her away!"

Hampton was in a passion—a mixture of grief and fury, of anguish and vengeance.

Dick read the whole story there and then.

Al Hampton had loved Ethel Elton before Henley died, and loved her still.

"Come!" Dick said. "There's nothing more to be found out here. Wrap the sacque in the paper yonder, and come with me!"

Hampton obeyed meekly as a child. He carefully wrapped up the bundle, and then they left the room, descended the staircase, and soon were in the rear court.

From thence they went into the livery stable.

There was only one man in attendance—a big negro.

"Did a conveyance go out of here a few minutes ago?" he demanded.

"No, not one to-day, sah. Berry dull."

"Don't lie to me!"

"Not lying, sah. I belongs to de chu'ch!"

"Where's the office?"

The negro pointed it out, and the two detectives sought it. It was small and foul-smelling.

The man behind the desk was fat, florid, and important.

"Has a conveyance left your place within an hour?" Dick demanded.

"No."

"Sure?"

The stately official stared, then picked up his newspaper, and pretended to read.

"See here, my friend!" Dick cried, "that air of arrogance may work with some, but not with me. A carriage did leave here, and you know it. I am a detective, and I know it! Now, then, *who* was in that vehicle?"

The florid man's tongue immediately became loosened.

"It was a hack," he said. "The driver was on the box. The window curtains were drawn, and I know nothing about who was inside."

"Who hired the hack?"

"That I don't know. The bargain was made with the driver."

"Where was the hack to go?"

"Don't know!"

"Do you know anything?" retorted Dick. "Well we will see. Look out I don't make it warm for you, my friend!"

"Hold on! Call around when the driver comes back. He can tell you more than I can, for I don't know."

"Very well! What was the driver's name?"

"Michael McMuck."

Dick and Hampton left the office.

"The trail is not lifted yet," Dick remarked. "Come! We will get out of this!"

CHAPTER IX.

VINTON ALSO TURNS THE TABLES.

LATER ON, they returned to the vicinity of the livery stable.

"We had better get a description of the man," Dick decided, "and then we will know him when he comes in."

So he went into a bakery, and made inquiries sufficient to enable him to know the coachman, on his return.

They hung around the neighborhood for hours, and at last the coachman came back. But, Dick did not approach him, at once.

There was a little saloon around the corner, and knowing the predisposition of the average coachman to take a "nip" after a long drive, Dick watched this saloon, and was rewarded by seeing the coachman sneak in by a side entrance.

"Wait, here," Dick ordered. "I will come back directly, though, maybe, without news!"

Michael McMuck was at the bar, when the detective entered the saloon.

He was a six-footer, smooth faced and evidently possessed of prodigious strength. Compare the two men, one would have decided that he could "do" the detective, without the least trouble.

But that didn't prove to be the case.

Dick marched up to his man, and, grasping him by the shoulder, wheeled him around from the counter, with a suddenness that surprised him.

"McMuck!" Dick cried, "I want you. Do you remember me, and a certain case, a few years ago, where you came near going up? Now, then, you're in as bad a fix again, unless you have sense. Come! I want to talk to you!"

McMuck glared at him a moment savagely.

"I don't know you!" he declared. "What d'ye want, anyhow?"

"I want *you*! I want to talk with you a moment. If you come peaceably, you will get off without arrest. If not, I shall arrest you. Take your choice, Michael!"

McMuck eyed the detective a moment, grimly; then said: "Come along!" and led the way into the street. "Now, then, what do you want, me bucko?"

"I want you to tell me where you took Ethel Henley?"

"Ethel Henley?" echoed McMuck, in well-assumed surprise. "Who the deuce is *she*?"

"The woman you took away in a hack, from Mom Hayman's. Come, out with it, or I'll run you in as sure as my name is Bristol!"

"I didn't take no one away from Mom Hayman's!"

"You lie!"

McMuck sized the detective up for a moment, and then hauled off, and leveled a blow at his face. But, he reckoned without his host.

Dick's quick left warded off the hackman's right, and the next thing McMuck knew, he had received a terrific crack in the nose, that caused the claret to come. Then, there was a clinch, and a struggle, which soon drew a crowd.

Hampton came in a hurry up.

The Irishman, owing to his size, was getting the best of it, having turned Dick over on his side.

"Quick! the handcuffs, in my coat pocket!" Dick cried, to Hampton. "Put 'em on this devil!"

But, McMuck was as strong as a bull, and a desperate struggle ensued, ere the darbies encircled his wrists.

As usual, there were no policemen around, and Dick and Al had got several severe raps, ere they succeeded in getting the bracelets on their man.

Then the change in McMuck became more evident.

He was as mild and docile as a lamb.

"I reckon you'll cave, now," concluded Dick, as he arose to his feet, and brushed the dirt off his clothes while Hampton kept a grip on the prisoner.

"Yes, I will!" McMuck replied. "Get me away from the perlice, and I'm wid you!"

He was trembling in every limb. Evidently, the thought of the station-house brought back no pleasant recollections to him.

"There's a quiet saloon further along the street!" he said, "where we can take a set-down, an' have a talk widout interruption. If you take off the bracelets, I'll go 'long wid you, an' tell you all I know, pervidin' you'll promise me one thing!"

"What is that?"

"That no matter what I tell you, you won't lock me or my woman up. Cynthia and I ain't been exact church people, all our lives, an' ef we was ter git pulled in again, why it would be apt to go hard wid us, I reckon!"

"It is a bargain!" Hampton said, before Dick could speak. "If he makes a clean breast of it, Bristol, what say you?"

"That depends on what he has to tell," Dick replied, wiping away the effects of a bloody nose with his handkerchief, and feeling anything but in a good humor. "I don't take much stock in Mr. McMuck, so far as I am personally concerned."

McMuck laughed.

"Ye got off luckier than most men would

have done," he said. "Well, what d'ye propose to do? I either want ye to do one thing or t'other, fer 'tain't werry pleasant to hev to stand and be stared at by the crowd!"

"How much do you know?" Dick demanded.

"I can answer your question, concerning the woman, if I am unmanacled."

"Promise me to make no attempt to escape!"

"I promise."

"Very good," and Dick forthwith removed the handcuffs.

"Now, come!"

McMuck led off, Dick and Hampton following on either side of him.

There was a tendency of a portion of the crowd to follow, but when Dick turned and ordered them back, they desisted.

McMuck led the way for something like four blocks, to where there was a quiet little room, with a modest bar, and several common deal tables scattered about.

Here they sat down, and presuming McMuck's tongue would be best loosened by a little bug-juice, Dick ordered the drinks.

After these had been partaken of, the hackman said:

"Well, boss, now I'll do as I promised. In course we both got sore heads from our little scrap, but thet needn't make us enemies. There is a blamed sight more I'd rather hev fer an enemy than the likes o' you, and don't ye forget it. If it wasn't I'm half as big ag'in as yez, ye'd have givin' me the wurst bastin' I ever had in my life, shure. But, we didn't come out so bad, after all. Neither has got a broken bone, I guess, and if ye'r not ashamed to shake hands with an Irish-American, ye'r not ashamed to shake hands wid a man as can prevent a murder bein' done. I tell you this, even though he is a nagur. Ye know an Irishman and a nagur ain't mates!"

"Here is my hand. Shake!"

McMuck's face lighted up cheerily, as he seized the other's hand, and squeezed it warmly.

"Ye'r like the rest of thim!" he said, tears springing to his eyes, for the first time in years perhaps. "I never bet on a Yankee yet, what didn't turn out white. I met a feller onc't, who helped me out of a bad scrape, an' he was one of yez. Me an' Cynthia have a bad name, an' once one's got that, and is poor, the whole wo'ld seems ready to give 'em a kick, except a true-born Yank. An' that's sayin' a good deal for an Irishman, as yez will admit. But, you want to know about the cab bizness ye was askin' afther?"

"Yes, I do."

"Well, I have known Horace Elton some years, and done a good deal of work for him, in one way and another, but never a m'ane job ontill to-day. Thin he hired me to do phat I niver thought I'd bargain to do."

The Irishman was becoming more visibly excited now.

"Well, what did he hire you to do?" Dick demanded, beginning to grow impatient.

"To commit a murder! But, I will begin at the beginning and tell you all. Then you can judge for yourself what kind of a man Elton is."

"Yesterday I met Val Vinton, the gambler, on West Fort street, where I had gone to see my wife who is working in a private family. Vinton advised me to go at once and see Elton who had some work for me to do that would pay me better than driving the hack. So, after I got off duty, I went around to his house and questioned him as to what he might be wantin'. He told me thet his sister had been crazy for some time, and was a victim of a plot. That, owin' to her demented condition, she was not able to attend to her business, and that he had had to keep her locked up at Mom Hayman's until he could prepare a quiet retreat for her. He wanted me to

have a carriage ready at a certain hour, and to assist in conveying her to the retreat he had prepared for her. For this he said he'd give me a hundred and fifty dollars, and I was to see nothing, know nothing, and above all, say nothing, and after the work was done he would give me a job as his coachman at fifty a month. Well, not knowing that anything was wrong, I consented. Elton, he sez, the girl is violent, says he, and I'll drug her to keep her from bein' a nuisance on the way. Then, he says, I've a five hundred job if you're willin' to tackle it. I says what is it? for money has been devilish scarce with me and Cynthia for a long time, an' a lot o' six hundred and fifty dollars ain't picked up on every bush every day in a week, as yez well may know.

"But, sez I, if it's a crooked job, maybe I'll take it, and maybe I'll not. Anyhow, I'll pump his nibs, and maybe I can sell what I learn for su'thin'. So I axed him what I would have to do, an' he told me. He told me he had an enemy—a nagur—who had threatened to take his life at the very first opportunity and that it was shure he would if he got the chance. This nagur, he said, was a fugitive from justice and could not be caught, for every one was afraid to try to arrest him, beca'se he was sich a desp'rit character. Elton said he was afraid, shure, to leave his house after night, for fear of bein' assassinated. So he said if I'd hunt up the nagur, and, on the quiet, give him a dig in the ribs that would settle him, he'd give me five hundred dollars—one hundred down and four when I had proved to him the black was dead.

"Well, sir, I promised. I thought o' how my old gal had just come out o' the Penitentiary at Jackson, sick near to the coffin. Then I axed who the nagur was!"

Here McMuck paused a moment for breath for he had been speaking rapidly.

"The nagur was Job Razzle!" Dick dryly suggested.

"By me soul, the very same. How did ye know?"

"I simply judged!" Dick replied.

"Well," went on McMuck, "as soon as I heard the name of the man I was to kill, I knew the racket. I knew that Razzle was formerly"—here he paused, then he added—"all right—ye'r takin' it down, as I tell yez. I'm glad of it. I'll swear ter every word I say, an' mebbe that will help my character. D'ye know where Zion's church is?"

"No."

"Well, it don't matter much. Me an' Cynthia has made up our minds we're goin' ter lead a better life, an' that's why I tell yez what I do."

"Now, as I was sayin', I knew there was suthin' crooked. I knew Razzle had been in the employ of Val Vinton, then before that in the service of Jacob Elton. I knew there was some trouble between Horace and old Jake, and I sez to myself, there's suthin' in this. I remembered that I had heard there was some dispute about Jacob Elton's will not bein' square, a-leavin' all his money to Ethel. Sez I to myself, if Razzle is out o' the way, an' I stick up fer Horace, why, there will be but two witnesses left!"

"Two left?" echoed Dick. "Why, I understand there were but two, originally."

"There was three of 'em!"

"And the third one?"

"The first witness was Vinton Valentine, who is Val Vinton. The second was old Job Razzle, the body servant of Jacob Elton!"

"And the other?" Dick cried, breathlessly.

"Your humble servant, Michael McMuck!"

Dick leaped to his feet.

"I cannot believe it!" he cried. "But, first, tell me where is Ethel. I'll pay you well for this, my boy, if you're square with me, if I never receive a cent for it. A triumph over Horace Elton now would do me more good than money!"

"You will receive good value for your services, my dear friend Bristol," Hampton assured. "You tackled this case, in the interests of a villain, but found him to be a villain. You went to work with the deliberate purpose to right a wrong. You have expended your money freely, to find out what you needed to know, and at last you have found out where Ethel is—the only woman I love, or ever have loved."

"I don't think we have found out yet where she is!" Dick retorted.

"Nevertheless, we will find out, and I'll see that you are well rewarded."

"Excuse me, feller," and McMuck turned his gaze upon Hampton. "Ye love thet girl, don't ye?"

Hampton arose proudly from his chair.

"Ay! with all my soul—say nothing about heart. The only woman I ever loved, or who ever loved me. She did love me, Ethel did, but, by my wayward habits, she seemed to think I'd never be able to lead her a pleasant life. So she married poor Henley, my rival. I smothered my grief as best I could. I loved Henley as a brother—Ethel, as his wife. But—Go on, man!"—this to McMuck, for Hampton was getting terribly excited, between anguish and a desire to know where Ethel was.

"Well, you'd bether hear my story out fu'st," McMuck resumed. "If ye'd give me another drop o' the old boy, Mr. Bussels!"

"Bristol, please."

"Yes, Mr. Bristol, I had forgotten."

Dick ordered the drinks, and then looked at the hackman attentively.

McMuck did not seem inclined to speak until he got his drink.

When the tongue moved, it was after the whisky had passed over it. Then, he said:

"Well, I loved little Ethel Elton, some years ago, myself, but not having any family prestige, though I have had a good education, of course I had no show, and so I married one whose transactions, begorra, have led me into a heap of trouble, and don't yer fergit it!"

"Now, my friend, for I think if you are a friend of Mr. Bristol"—this to Hampton; here he stopped a moment, in the mean time counting over his fingers. Then he finished his speech: "you go to Mom's and fetch Hank Hayman here!"

Dick stared.

What could these two men want, together?

McMuck speedily explained.

"Hayman," he said, "took me into his confidence, this morning, to assist you in entrapping Elton. Of course, Bristol—excuse my familiarity—I am, in one sense, a traitor, but, begob, in another I'm an American! If yez hadn't arrested me, my soul w'u'd have gone to the devil sure; but, you stopped me, and may holy blessings fall on yez, for I can express myself no further; I'd be a murderer."

"Now, then, when Hayman comes, we'll have Ethel Elton Henley out of hell!"

"What do you mean?" yelled Hampton, springing to his feet.

"I mean," cried McMuck, "that I would not as a defender of the worst woman in Detroit, trust Val Vinton!"

"And she's there!" groaned Hampton.

"She is a prisoner, there!" McMuck declared. "A prisoner! I saw her put there, in a room in which no dacent man would put his dog!" McMuck cried, excitedly.

"Be calm!" urged Dick, for Hampton had begun to pace the floor, with rage in his mind and murder in his heart.

"Yes. Be calm!" urged McMuck. "I will show you the way. Leave me the ink!"

Then he relapsed into silence, while two detectives watched him—and waited.

"I've no ability—begob, as a detective," the coachman finally said, more to himself than to his hearers, "but I'll do it right, onnyhow. It sha'n't be no botch job. Let me see! How will we do it?"

Hampton arose, impatiently.

"Say, when are you going to tell us where the sister of Horace Elton is?" he demanded.

"You sit down!" McMuck cried, not rising, but with a fierce glare in his eyes.

"Oh! my chum is all right!" Dick assured. "Whatever you do, don't go back on him. Now, *where* is she?"

"Well, sor, Ethel, you know, went away with Henley," pursued McMuck. "Horace Elton foresaw, by forcing his sister to marry Vinton, that he would silence one victim—that is, one witness to old Jacob Elton's will. Then, if he could put Razzle out of the way, he'd be solid, for he could frighten me. Well, as you've seen, I didn't scare for a cent. Now, send your friend here—Mr. Al Hampton, for you can bet I know him, in spite of his disguise—off for Hayman, an' have him and Hank come back here, and wait for us. Thin, if ye'r a detective of the sort ye claim to be, or as I've heard ye are, I'll show ye how to do the business as fine as we drive a kerridge in Detroit—for I have somethin' that only two men in the city of Detroit possess!"

"What is it?" Dick demanded.

"A duplicate of old Jacob Elton's will!"

"By Heaven! if it is true, you are a made man for life!"

"Begob, I've got it, but not here. Razzle has got one, too, but I don't know whether he hain't been robbed of it or not, 'for,' sez old Jacob—I was in his confidence, as his coachman—'you sign your name here.' Then, to Vinton, 'You go down and send me up my friend and servant, Razzle.' I thought he was going to peg out then, but he sez to me, sez he, 'Ye'r to wait here, you and Job, until that man's gone.' I knew who he me'nt, begorra, by the significant way he motioned. He had met Vinton somewhere maybe, and he was sore. Then, sez he: '*Morphine!*' an' asked, 'Do you know Ethel?"

"Of course, I answered I did. Thin he said: 'D'ye know this Vinton?' I said 'Yes, an' a foine witness *he* is to yer will.' Thin he sez, 'It's signed, an' there yez'll find a letter-copying press. Here's the will. Read it over carefully, and then, make *two* copies—one for Job, and another for yourself, in case a fight comes up.' I did it, an' that's how I got possession of a copy of Jacob Elton's will."

"Give me the copy!" urged Dick.

"Not yet!" protested McMuck, carefully. "Now, send your friend Hampton—and I hope some day to be able to call him my friend—on the errand to the saloon of old Mom Hayman. Then, when Hank comes back, I will act. I will take you to Ethel's release; I will give you the whole history of this case, so far as I am concerned in it, and I will give myself, I think, begob, a credit. If I do, I'll never do another act that a man ought to be ashamed of. Then, Mr. Bristol, you will have the credit of saying that you conquered the worst man in Michigan."

Dick pondered a minute, then turned to his companion, and said, in French, which he evidently thought his prisoner did not understand:

"Yes, go! Find Hayman! Bring him back. I do really believe this man is all right. We can do no less than try him. He may be our lucky star, you see!"

And Hampton went.

"And, my friend Bristol," said McMuck, after Hampton was gone, "I will prove to you I am all your friend, and many times over. So come!"

"Where?" Bristol demanded.

"Never mind. Come! It's not far off. You've got a memoranda of what I've told yez so far?"

"Yes? Well, thin, put down one thing more, and I'm off, to swear to my statement. I was Jacob Elton's coachman. Got that?"

"Yes."

"And a witness to his will. Got that?"

"Yes."

"Have you got everything so that when I take yez before a magistrate, yez can place before him what I've got to swear to, so I can swear out a warrant—no, *you'd* better do that. You're a detective, an' you can do that better than I can."

"All right," assented Dick, and, calling for some paper, he wrote out a charge against Horace Elton. Then he asked McMuck to read it. He did so.

"That will do," he said. "Now, let's go. I'll go before a magistrate, and swear to that, and then, when we come back here, I'll take you all to where you can get Ethel out of a bad place!"

Just then, who should accidentally drop into this quiet resort but Mr. Val Vinton.

He immediately spotted the two men, and approached them.

"You are Bristol, I think?" he said, addressing Dick. "I want to see you. Can you help me?"

"I cannot help you."

"Why not?"

"Because you are a villain!"

"I am not. If you will give me an audience, I will prove to you that I am not."

"Very well. *Here!*" said Dick, to the coachman. "Remain where you are, Mac," and shoving a chair toward Vinton, he motioned him to the seat.

"Now, then," Dick remarked. "I want you to tell me what you have to tell, for, as matters now look, I shall make it mighty warm for you!"

"You will have no occasion for that, sir. All I have to say now is simply this: A few years ago, when I was rich, and Elton was, too, I and he were in love with the same girl. He won by base treachery and I swore everlasting vengeance on him. Then, because he was a rascal, as I well knew, he tried to inveigle me into marrying his sister. I did not know Ethel Elton, but, after an introduction to her, I formed a high opinion of her. I said to myself, this is a job. But why? I knew Jacob Elton was pretty near dead, so guessed that he had something to do with Horace Elton's scheme?" Whatever guided my footsteps, that night, to Jacob Elton's door, I do not know, but I went. And, just as I did, Razzle, his servant, came out. I was asked to come in and witness an important document. I did so. By some means, Horace Elton found all this out, and offered to legally take Ethel away from Henley, to whom she was then married, and compel her to marry me. Taking the cue, I did what he wanted. Then, through a decoy letter, by which Ethel was to be restored to her brother's affection, she was returned to Detroit, but was decoyed from Windsor, and transferred in a dazed condition to Mom Hayman's, and there she was kept until today. I questioned Elton if a detective was not on his track and finally he admitted it. He knew the three of you, the minute he entered Mom's, and rushed Ethel off to my house on — street. I have visited Mrs. Henley day by day. I have supplied her with the necessities of life, where her brother would have robbed her of even her food. Ask her. I am a gambler, but not a villain. She will tell you all I have said is true!"

"I believe you!" Dick declared. "Now, will you *swear* to what you have said?"

"With all my heart!"

Dick turned to McMuck.

"Your opinion?"

"That the man whom I've heard denounced as a villain is a boy of the true kind!" replied McMuck, with true Irish enthusiasm.

"To which I add my like belief," Dick supplemented. "Lead on, McMuck, not McDuff—lead on!"

"Where to?" demanded Vinton, in some excitement.

"I'll show you," answered McMuck, grimly. "If you're not afraid to take yer oath, come wid me."

And they followed the coachman.

It was four blocks away when they entered a dingy little office occupied by a little, old, gray-haired office politician, but an alderman all the same. He looked at the trio, inquiringly, directing his sharpest glances at Deadwood Dick, whom, intuitively, he seemed to take for an officer in disguise.

"Well, Mike, what are you up for now?"

"Nothin', sor, 'cept that two ov us want to swear to a confession. We've both been layin' for a villain, and here's our backin', begorra—Mr. Deadwood Dick, of Deadwood, otherwise Mr. R. M. Bristol, United States Government Detective. Mr. Bristol, Alderman McClerry, also a magistrate, before whom you can swear us."

At that moment Hank Hayman rushed into the room!

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

THE magistrate looked astonished; still more so when Hayman rushed in. Why should Hayman be here, at least ten blocks from Mom's?

"Well, what d'ye want?" Dick demanded, angrily.

"Don't swear yet!" Hayman protested. "You've been dogged. Elton follered the lot o' ye here, then hired a hack, and was away like wildfire!"

"Quick! Get a hack, and fetch it here!" Dick commanded, showing Hayman out of the door; then, turning to the magistrate:

"Swear these men with all possible speed, and issue me a warrant for the arrest of Horace Elton, of No. — Brainerd street; then telephone to the Central Office, to prevent his leaving the city!"

The magistrate stared.

Dick was terribly excited now.

His wild Western blood was at a fever-heat.

From what Hayman had said, he knew that Elton had taken alarm. Perhaps, out of spite, he had run Ethel over into Canada. If so, hope was lost!

"Work! Be quick!" he almost shouted at the magistrate, who was staring in supreme surprise, literally unable to understand the situation. "Swear these men! Give me a blank warrant!" and he stepped behind the astonished magistrate's desk, and filled out a warrant, ready for the signature of Mr. McClerry.

The alderman set briskly to work, and swore both McMuck and Vinton, and, their testimony being given, Dick at once handed the warrant to the magistrate, who, after looking over, and comparing it with the testimony he had taken, immediately signed it.

"I've known Elton a long time!" he said. "but I never could have believed this of him."

By the time this was done, Hayman reappeared.

"Hack is here!" he called out.

And the four men entered it, Val Vinton giving the directions.

"No! no!" Dick cried. "Hampton must go along," and he ordered the driver first to the saloon where Hampton had been told to wait.

This evidently did not please Vinton, for a scowl came over his face; but he said nothing.

With Dick, Vinton, Hampton and McMuck and Hayman aboard, the hack rolled away.

"I'm afraid we will be too late!" Dick said.

"So am I, in one respect!" Hayman added.

"Why?"

"Well, you'll find the girl most likely, but not Elton—not Elton *alive!*"

"How do you mean?"

"He will have paid the penalty of his crimes, long ere we reach him."

"Explain yourself."

"Well, he was followed by an avenger. It appears that old Job Razzle has been a prisoner of Elton's in some out-of-town place for weeks, and been starved and abused until he was near pegged out. Then he escaped, hoofed it back to Detroit, and, possessed of some money of which Elton knew nothing of, he swore for vengeance. When Elton took a hack, as I told ye and fled, old Razzle took another and started in pursuit. Before he got into his hack, he said, sez he: 'I'll kill dat debbil shure's ye'r born. Gib dis to de police!' I had previously been talking with him and he had been telling me how he had been used by Elton. The minute he spied Elton boarding the hack he handed me this letter, and hailed another conveyance, uttering the threat I have told ye of."

Here Hayman handed Dick the letter.

It was unsealed, and, after a glance at the contents, Dick uttered a cry of joy.

"Job Razzle's testimony as to the signing of Jacob Elton's will!" he said, "sworn to before a magistrate. Now, all that remains to be done is to release Ethel, and collar Horace, and my work is done. We have all the evidence we want!"

The hack rolled on, and finally drew up in front of one of Vinton's houses. As the men alighted on the sidewalk, the gambler uttered a cry of horror—at least it seemed so.

"What's the matter?" cried Dick.

"Look! the door is open!" groaned Vinton, reeling against a tree.

The man evidently had a heart!

"Speak!" cried Dick. "What do you mean?"

"Elton has been here! He had a key!" was the faint response of Vinton; then, strong man, desperate man, conscious-stricken, maybe, he fell.

Dick waited not, but rushed into the house, while Hampton helped Vinton to his feet again.

"Come, brace up!" he cried. "This is no time for weakness. Come!"

Vinton braced up, and the three, McMuck, Hampton and Hayman helped him into the house.

Vinton was conducted into the front parlor, which was luxuriously furnished, and laid upon a sofa.

He was white and trembling. All his great strength seemed to have vanished.

Hampton eyed him a moment, with questioning gaze and then said:

"You seem strangely affected all of a sudden. That looks very singular."

"No doubt of it. I fear Horace Elton has carried out his oath!"

"And what is that?"

"That if worst came to worst, and the hounds of the law began to bother him, he would first kill his sister and then himself. Help me! help me up-stairs! My God! if this should prove true, I shall kill myself for not having killed that devil ere this!"

The gambler's agony was real and terrible. Hayman, the strongest of the party, except perhaps McMuck, raised him bodily and stood him on his feet.

"Now, walk!" he said. "You're no baby!"

And Vinton walked.

They went up-stairs, Hampton leading, and opening such doors as they passed.

Where was Dick? he wondered.

"Top floor!" groaned Vinton, by way of direction, and trembling like a leaf.

And to the top floor they went.

"That room!" and Vinton pointed to a door.

What a sight the party beheld when they entered the room!

A colored man—stone dead!

A young woman in death throes!

Two men struggling like demons.

Horace Elton and Deadwood Dick!

They were in a death-clinch!

Vinton, seeing Ethel on the floor, ran to her and took her in his arms.

Then, as a proof of his devotion to one who had never cared for him, he handed her to Hampton.

"Take her away!" he cried. "Lay her on a bed, and *don't* let her die! Save her—save her!" he almost wailed.

Then he sprung like a madman upon the struggling pair on the floor.

He literally tore Dick from the embrace of Elton, and pounced upon the villain like an enraged lion, grasping him by the throat, while Elton did the same to the gambler. Dick had reeled into a corner, in a state of exhaustion. McMuck and Hayman had followed Hampton, assisting to carry the dying Ethel Henley to a room where her departing spirit might pass away in peace.

In the other room Vinton and Elton still struggled.

Those terrible hands of the sport seemed to be like vises of steel, and they soon shut out forever the life of Horace Elton.

With a grim smile of satisfaction, Vinton arose, and looked at the victim of his work.

"Avenged, Lelia!" he said. "Avenged poor Ethel!"

He turned to Dick and assisted him to rise.

"Are you hurt?" he asked.

"No. I'll be all right directly!"

"Well, steady yourself. I'm off. Good-by!"

"What do you mean? You've not killed him?"

"I have carried out my oath of vengeance. Good-by. I'm off!"

Dick, weak as he was, tried to seize him, but was pushed away, and fell, as Vinton vanished.

Passing the door where he supposed Ethel to have been taken, he thrust his head in!

"How is she?" he asked.

Al Hampton, who was seated on the bed, holding the object of his affection in his arms, with tears streaming down his cheeks, while McMuck and Hayman were quietly weeping in one corner of the room, replied:

"She is dead!"

"And, I have killed her murderer!" Vinton said, entering the room. "I must go! I am a fugitive from justice hence. Hampton, though being that girl's jailer, I loved her! She was pure, sweet and heart-broken. I am a criminal, but I worked for vengeance, and I've had it, I have murdered, and with deliberate intent, her brother, the man who estranged my promised wife from me, and killed his own sister! Can I be allowed to touch my lips to that mother of Henley's child before I go, never to be heard from again?"

"Come!" Hampton said, tears again running down his face.

Vinton advanced.

With the gentleness of a woman he kissed the forehead of the dead girl, then, with a sob, he turned and left the room—the house—the country!

Since that day Valentine Vinton has never been heard from.

Ethel Elton and Henley were laid side by side.

Little "Tot" is still in the care of Mrs. Todd.

Old "Mom" still hangs out at her old rookery on Larned street.

McMuck and Cynthia are living over in Windsor.

Hayman and Hampton have become partners, and are going to start in the lumber business, a letter informs.

Much luck to them!

THE END.

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- 189 Rob Rockett; or, Driven to the Wall.
- 196 Shadowed; or, Rob Rockett's Fight for Life.
- 206 Dark Paul, the Tiger King.
- 212 Dashing Dave, the Dandy Detective.
- 220 Tom Tanner; or, The Black Sheep of the Flock.
- 225 Sam Charcoal, the Premium Dandy.
- 235 Shadow Sam, the Messenger Boy.
- 242 The Two "Bloods"; or, Shenandoah Bill and His Gang.
- 252 Dick Dushaway; or, A Dakota Boy in Chicago.
- 262 The Young Sharps; or, Rollicking Mike's Hot Trail.
- 274 Jolly Jim, the Detective Apprentice.
- 289 Jolly Jim's Job; or, The Young Detective.
- 298 The Water-Hound; or, The Young Thoroughbred.
- 305 Dushaway, of Dakota; or, A Western Lad in the Quaker City.
- 324 Ralph Ready, the Hotel Boy Detective.
- 341 Tony Thorne, the Vagabond Detective.
- 358 The Reporter-Detective; or, Fred Flyer's Blizzard.
- 367 Wide-Awake Joe; or, A Boy of the Times.
- 379 Larry, the Leveler; or, The Bloods of the Boulevard.
- 408 Firefly Jack, the River-Rat Detective.
- 423 The Lost Finger; or, The Entrapped Cashier.
- 428 Fred Flyer, the Reporter Detective.
- 432 Invincible Logan, the Pinkerton Ferret.
- 456 Billy Brick, the Jolly Vagabond.
- 466 Wide-Awake Jerry, Detective; or, Entombed Alive.
- 479 Detective Dodge; or, The Mystery of Frank Hearty.
- 488 Wild Dick Racket.
- 501 Boots, the Boy Fireman; or, Too Sharp for the Sharper.
- 566 The Secret Service Boy Detective.

BY OLL COOMES.

- 5 Vagabond Joe, the Young Wandering Jew.
- 13 The Dumb Spy.
- 27 Antelope Abe, the Boy Guide.
- 31 Keen-Knife, the Prince of the Prairies.
- 41 Lasso Jack, the Young Mustang.
- 53 The Border King; or, The Secret Fox.
- 71 Delaware Dick, the Young Ranger Spy.
- 74 Hawk-eye Harry, the Young Trapper Ranger.
- 85 Rollo, the Boy Ranger.
- 134 Sure Shot Seth, the Boy Rifleman.
- 145 Scar-Face Saul, the Silent Hunter.
- 146 Silver Star, the Boy Knight.
- 153 Eagle Kit, the Boy Demon.
- 163 Little Texas, the Young Mustang.
- 178 Old Solitary, the Hermit Trapper.
- 182 Little Hurricane, the Boy Captain.
- 202 Prospect Pete; or, The Young Outlaw Hunter.
- 208 The Boy Hercules; or, The Prairie Tramps.
- 218 Tiger Tom, the Texas Terror.
- 224 Dashing Dick; or, Trapper Tom's Castle.
- 228 Little Wildfire, the Young Prairie Nomad.
- 238 The Parson Detective; or, The Little Ranger.
- 243 The Disguised Guide; or, Wild Raven, the Ranger.
- 260 Dare-Devil Dan, the Young Prairie Ranger.
- 272 Minkskin Mike, the Boy Sharpshooter.
- 290 Little Foxfire, the Boy Spy.
- 300 The Sky Demon; or, Rainbolt, the Ranger.
- 334 Whip-King Joe, the Boy Ranchero.
- 409 Hercules; or, Dick, the Boy Ranger.
- 417 Webfoot Mose, the Tramp Detective.
- 422 Baby Sam, the Boy Giant of the Yellowstone.
- 444 Little Buckskin, the Young Prairie Centaur.
- 457 Wingedfoot Fred; or, Old Polar Saul.
- 463 Tamarac Tom, the Big Trapper Boy.
- 473 Old Tom Rattler, the Red River Epidemic.
- 482 Stonewall Bob, the Boy Trojan.
- 562 Blundering Basil, the Hermit Boy Trapper.

BY T. C. HARBAUGH.

- 23 Nick o' the Night; or, The Boy Spy of '76.
- 37 The Hidden Lodge; or, The Little Hunter.
- 47 Nightingale Nat; or, The Forest Captains.
- 64 Dandy Jack; or, The Outlaws of the Oregon Trail.
- 82 Kit Harefoot, the Wood-Hawk.
- 94 Midnight Jack; or, The Boy Trapper.
- 106 Old Frosty, the Guide; or, The White Queen.
- 123 Klown Charley, the White Mustang.
- 139 Judge Lynch, Jr.; or, The Boy Vigilante.
- 155 Gold Trigger, the Sport; or, The Girl Avenger.
- 169 Tornado Tom; or, Injun Jack from Red Cora.
- 183 Ned Temple, the Border Boy.
- 194 Arkansaw; or, The Queen of Fate's Revenge.
- 207 Navajo Nick, the Boy Gold Hunter.
- 215 Captain Bullet; or, Little Tonknot's Crusade.
- 231 Plucky Phil; or, Rosa, the Red Jezebel.
- 241 Bill Bravo; or, The Roughs of the Rockies.
- 255 Captain Apollo, the King-Pin of Bowls.
- 267 The Buckskin Detective.
- 279 Old Winch; or, The Buckskin Desperadoes.
- 294 Dynamite Dan; or, The Bowie Blade of Cochetopa.
- 302 The Mountain Detective; or, The Trigger Bar Bally.
- 316 Old Eclipse, Trump Card of Arizona.
- 326 The Ten Pards; or, The Terror of Take-Noties.
- 336 Big Benson; or, The Queen of the Lasso.
- 345 Pitiless Matt; or, Red Thunderbolt's Secret.
- 356 Cool Sam and Pard; or, The Terrible Six.
- 366 Velvet Foot, the Indian Detective.
- 386 Captain Outlaw; or, The Buccaneer's Girl Fox.
- 396 Rough Rob; or, The Twin Champions of Blue Blazes.
- 411 The Silken Lasso; or, The Rose of Ranch Robin.
- 418 Felix Fox, the Boy Spotter.
- 425 Texas Trump, the Border Rattler.
- 436 Phil Flash, the New York Fox.
- 445 The City Vampires; or, Red Rolfe's Pigeon.
- 461 One Against Fifty; or, The Last Man of Keno Baz.
- 470 The Boy Shadow; or, Felix Fox's Hunt.
- 477 The Excelsior Sport; or, The Washington Spotter.
- 499 Single Sight, the One-Eyed Sport.
- 502 Branded Ben, the Night Ferret.
- 512 Dodger Dick, the Wharf-Spy Detective.
- 521 Dodger Dick's Best Dodge.
- 528 Fox and Falcon, the Bowery Shadows.
- 538 Dodger Dick, the Dock Ferret.
- 545 Dodger Dick's Double; or, The Rival Boy Detectives.
- 553 Dodger Dick's Desperate Case.
- 563 Dodger Dick, the Boy Vidocq.
- 578 The Two Shadows.

BY COLONEL PRENTISS INGRAHAM.

- 7 The Flying Yankee; or, The Ocean Outcast.
- 17 Ralph Roy, the Boy Buccaneer; or, The Fugitive Yacht.
- 24 Diamond Dirk; or, The Mystery of the Yellowstone.
- 62 The Shadow Ship; or, The Rival Lieutenants.
- 75 The Boy Duellist; or, The Cruise of the Sea-Wolf.
- 102 Dick Dead-Eye, the Boy Smuggler.
- 111 The Sea-Devil; or, The Midshipman's Legacy.
- 116 The Hussar Captain; or, The Hermit of Hell Gate.
- 197 Little Grit; or, Bessie, the Stock-Tender's Daughter.
- 204 Gold Plume; or, The Kid-Glove Sport.
- 216 Bison Bill, the Prince of the Plains.
- 222 Grit, the Bravo Sport; or, The Woman Trailer.
- 229 Crimson Kate; or, The Cowboy's Triumph.
- 237 Lone Star, the Cowboy Captain.
- 245 Merle, the Middy; or, The Freelance Heir.
- 250 The Midshipman Mutineer; or, Brandt, the Buccaneer.
- 264 The Floating Feather; or, Merle Monte's Treasure Island.
- 269 The Gold Ship; or, Merle, the Condemned.
- 276 Merle Monte's Cruise; or, The Chase of "The Gold Ship."
- 280 Merle Monte's Fate; or, Pearl, the Pirate's Bride.
- 284 The Sea Marauder; or, Merle Monte's Pledge.
- 287 Billy Blue-Eyes, the Boy Rover of the Rio Grande.
- 304 The Dead Shot Dandy; or, Benito, the Boy Bugler.
- 308 Keno Kit; or, Dead Shot Dandy's Double.
- 314 The Mysterious Marauder; or, The Boy Bugler's Long Trail.
- 377 Bonodel, the Boy Rover; or, The Flagless Schooner.
- 388 The Indian Pilot; or, The Search for Pirate Island.
- 387 Warpath Will, the Boy Phantom.
- 393 Seawolf, the Boy Lieutenant.
- 402 Isador, the Young Conspirator; or, The Fatal League.
- 407 The Boy Insurgent; or, The Cuban Vendetta.
- 412 The Wild Yachtsman; or, The War-Cloud's Cruise.
- 429 Duncan Dare, the Boy Refugee.
- 433 A Cabin Boy's Luck; or, The Corsair.
- 437 The Sea Raider.
- 441 The Ocean Firefly; or, A Middy's Vengeance.
- 446 Haphazard Harry; or, The Scapegrace of the Sea.
- 450 Wizard Will; or, The Boy Ferret of New York.
- 454 Wizard Will's Street Scouts.
- 462 The Born Guide; or, The Sailor Boy Wanderer.
- 468 Neptune Ned, the Boy Coaster.
- 474 Flora; or, Wizard Will's Vagabond Pard.
- 483 Ferrets Afloat; or, Wizard Will's Last Case.
- 487 Nevada Ned, the Revolver Ranger.
- 495 Arizona Joe, the Boy Pard of Texas Jack.
- 497 Buck Taylor, King of the Cowboys.
- 503 The Royal Middy; or, The Shark and the Sea Cat.
- 507 The Hunted Midshipman.
- 511 The Outlawed Middy.
- 520 Buckskin Bill, the Comanche Shadow.
- 525 Brothers in Buckskin.
- 530 The Buckskin Browsers.
- 535 The Buc skin Rovers.
- 540 Captain Ku-Klux, the Marauder of the Rio.
- 545 Lieutenant Leo, the Son of Laditte.
- 550 Laditte's Legacy; or, The Avenging Son.
- 555 The Creole Corsair.
- 560 Pawnee Bill, the Prairie Shadower.
- 565 Kent Kingdom, the Card King.
- 570 Camille, the Card Queen.
- 575 The Surgeon-Scout Detective.

LATEST AND NEW ISSUES.

- 577 Pavement Pete, the Secret Sifter. By Jo Pierce.
- 578 Deadwood Dick, Jr., Afloat. By Edward L. Wheeler.
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- 580 The Outcast Cadet; or, The False Detective. By Col. Prentiss Ingraham.
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- 583 Saffron Sol, the Man With a Shadow. By Lieut. A. K. Sims.
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- 586 The Buckskin Avenger. By Col. Prentiss Ingraham.
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- 596 Jimmy the Kid; or, A Lamb Among Wolves. By Chas. Morris.
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- 598 Flute, the Singer Detective. By Geo. C. Jenks.
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